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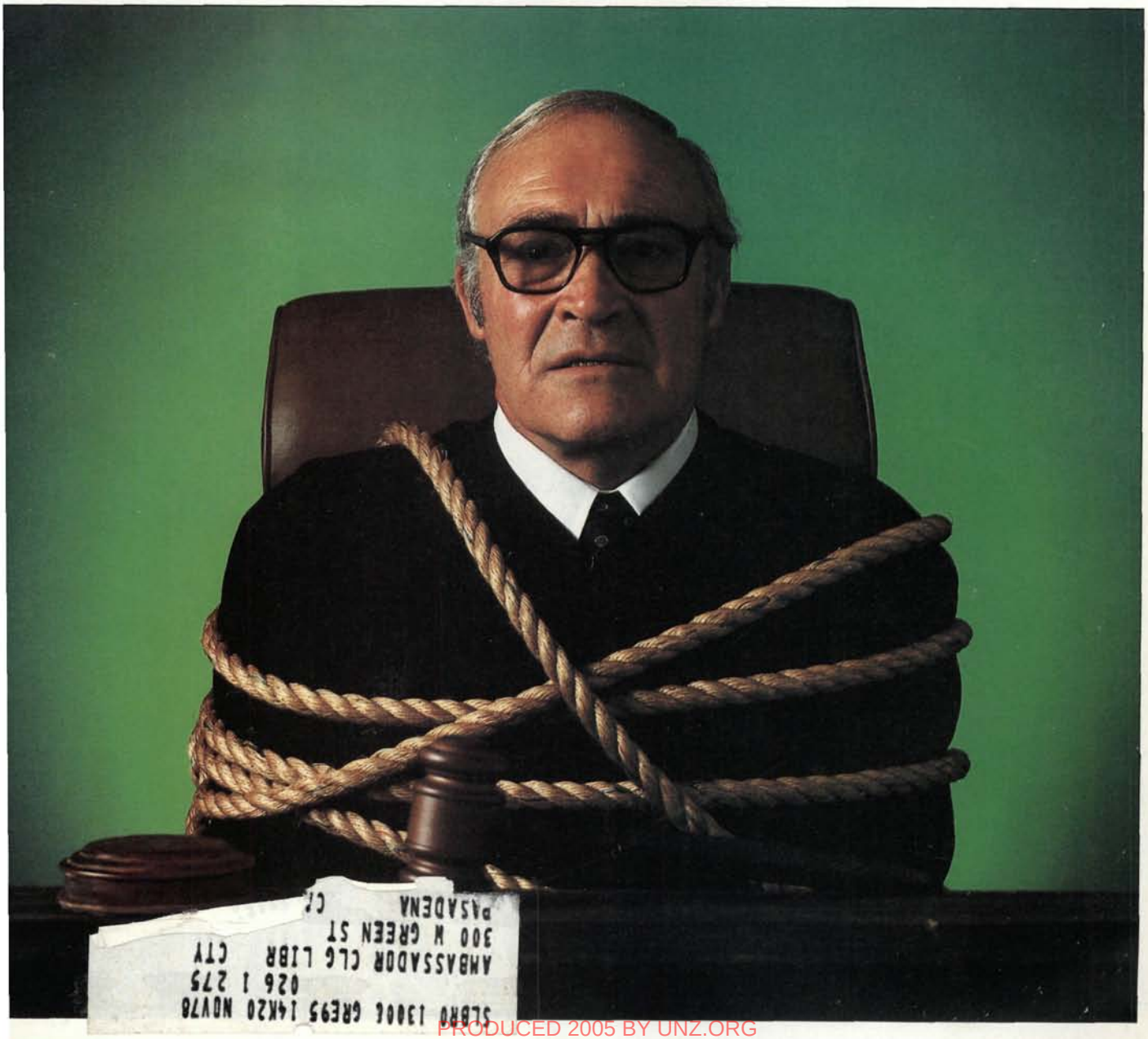

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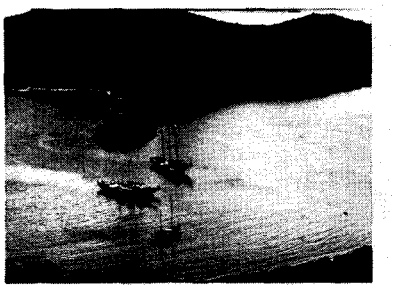

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Business and the rational mind, Part IV

Liberals, logical allies of business•The snobbery factor•A plea for independent thinking

We cannot, for the life of us, understand why so many liberals in this country are so hostile to private business, when in our opinion they should be working with business to achieve what should be their basic objectives.

Liberals have been among the prime movers in the enactment of much of this country's social legislation—Aid to Dependent Children, Social Security, housing for the poor and the elderly, school lunches, and other programs. All of these programs have to be financed by revenues derived mainly from taxes on individual and corporate income.

The greater these incomes—which is to say, the more prosperous American business is—the greater the tax revenues. When incomes drop, as in a recession, so do tax revenues. Social programs then have to be reduced accordingly or supported by deficit financing, which over any extended period means inflation. For the poor and for people living on fixed incomes, inflation is the cruelest tyranny of all.

It therefore would seem to us that in all logic liberals should be as pro-business as they are pro-social progress. And we believe many more of them would be if it were not so fashionable intellectually to be part of the "trendy left." Too many of them respond unthinkingly to social and academic pressures rather than engaging in clear, independent analysis.

Part of the problem appears to be snobbery, pure and simple. To many of what might be called the professional liberals, business—indeed, our whole industrial society—is impossibly vulgar. To some it is esthetically offensive. And because business can prosper only by serving the masses of people, some consider it unbearably plebeian.

Yet one of the continuing threads in the mainstream of liberal thought has long been a dedication to the democratic process and to the right of the masses of people to make their voice heard—and heard effectively. If people stop buying a company's goods or services on any large scale—or just make a credible threat to stop—that company's management tends to listen, and listen attentively. But if you think government is anywhere near as responsive, just recall your last encounter with your City Hall, or your maddening correspondence with a government agency.

Government can become so pervasive that it becomes virtually impossible for the citizenry to turn it around and change its course; indeed, ours may already have become so. But it's doubtful that business could ever get so big or so unresponsive, because it is subject to reaction in the marketplace and to public opinion generally, and to legislation that can curb an entire industry overnight.

What should be a tip-off to any thinking liberal is that an anti-business posture, complete with the cliches that too often substitute for thinking, is mandatory in many liberal circles and is not to be subjected to rigorous intellectual examination. It is a knee-jerk reaction, arising largely from conditions that ceased to exist many years ago and to some that never existed at all.

Lionel Trilling wrote: "It has for some time seemed to me that a criticism which has at heart the interest of liberalism might find its most useful work not in confirming liberalism in its sense of self-righteousness but rather in putting under some degree of pressure the liberal ideas and assumptions of the times."(*The Liberal Imagination: Essays on Literature and Society,* Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.)

We find puzzling the extent to which liberals often seem impelled to weaken the economic structure on which not just social progress, but indeed our national livelihood depends. To them we suggest the following, oversimplified but nevertheless pointing up the heart of the matter:

Without adequate profits, no businesses.

Without businesses, no jobs.

Without jobs, no social programs.

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LETTERS

Education Rumination

There are hundreds of avid general education advocates out here in the hinterlands who have suffered through the stupidities of the total elective system, have seen history courses disappear, and have witnessed the decade-long production of the new barbarians. I can guarantee that being involved in the demise of education on a day-to-day basis is sheer agony. Do you know what it's like to talk to semiliterate students when no metaphors or analogies work? Have you ever tried to teach Spinoza to a Rod McKuen fan or to a TV addict? Or seen students sign up on waiting lists for touchie-feelie courses in "human communication" while exciting interdisciplinary courses have trouble filling classrooms? I once taught in such situations, which are most likely replicated in many other institutions.

But now, after all the weariness, the agonized and tortured conversations, we have to hear how the "great" men of Harvard and Stanford and the rest are going to send shock waves to us.

Adler and Hutchins, Harry Broudy and Ralph Smith, and innumerable others have written about general education, aesthetic education, and liberal learning for years. If Harvard and other influential groups had fought for general education sooner and with vigor, they might have made a difference.

Prof. Douglas Di Biano
Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Ill.

One wishes Dean Rosovsky and his colleagues well and hopes that their efforts yield an effective formula for solid education. But there is room for doubt. Surely we should consider another view, one that celebrates freedom of choice and in doing so focuses less on a fixed body of knowledge and more on the distinctive intellectual style, the quality of mind, that a liberally educated person is thought to possess.

It is not immediately evident that intellectual independence can be taught, although it can be learned. People learn to be free by being free—by making choices and mistakes and by taking responsibility for them. An imposed curriculum may promote intellectual self-sufficiency, but the problem with such a curriculum is that it prolongs a state of dependence at a time when young adults should be experiencing independence.

Prof. Herman Eschenbacher
Brown University
Providence, R. I.

Susan Schiefelbein is to be congratulated for her article, which is an astonishingly fine piece of journalism. After sitting with the degree requirements committee of the College of Arts and Sciences here at Indiana University for the past year, I can assert that she has captured with remarkable precision the concerns, the frustrations, and the aspirations of a committee wrestling with the question of an educated student and a curriculum supportive o that aim.

Philip Namy, associate dea
Indiana Universit
Bloomington, Ind

Susan Schiefelbein misses the heart o the question "What makes an 'educate man'?" in two fundamental respects First, she takes for granted that th troubles of education lie in the nature o educational programs, namely, in thei failure to inform students about the rel ative importance of courses and to re quire that students take a coheren group of the most important ones. Bu the problem lies in our intellectual en terprise itself—in its exclusive stress or specialization, its increasing subjectior to techniques and technical jargons and its devotion to pursuits of knowl edge from which many human ele ments, including moral sensitivity anc deliberate judgments of value, have been purged to the utmost possible ex tent. As long as we suppose that thi enterprise is essentially sound anc fault the curriculum, we blind our selves to the grave trouble that beset us.

The second mistake lies in the im plicit assumption that education i gained by satisfying a set of require ments. It is suggested that the colleg has to make sure that students "receiv proper educational nutrition." The metaphor vividly expresses the com mon conception of learning. Student are regarded as more or less passive re cipients of the nutrition that others pre

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pare for them: The task assigned to them is therefore to chew and digest—activities that have little to do with the life of the mind. To search for an understanding of what it is to be educated is more valuable than to be led to believe there is a cluster of courses that guarantees education. The notion that the sole alternative to requirements is chaos or a "vast smorgasbord" of courses does not even allow for the student's own thoughtful judgment, valuation, and responsibility to appear on the horizon.

Prof. George Morgan
Brown University
Providence, R. I.

Pop Portents

Although I found Barry Gewen's article ["Bone-dry in the '70s," April 1] perceptive, well written, and thought provoking, I must disagree with the pessimistic portent of its conclusion: that American pop music, particularly rock, is in the throes of a "terminal state."

As a part-time composer of rock music, I share Gewen's despair over the inanities of disco and the artless offerings of many of today's glittery acts. But I do not doubt that there are better things ahead. For if it is anything, rock music is the folk music of our era; it draws on our culture, reflects it, and sometimes leads it. If for now rock is doing more reflecting than leading, that is more a comment on our current social condition than an indication of the demise of the form itself.

Until the next rock—or pop—renaissance, we have a wealth of talent to enjoy, from the polished renderings of Steely Dan and Cat Stevens to the maturing Sixties sounds of Dave Mason and Fleetwood Mac (remember, many of the trailblazers of the Sixties were very young).

Rock is not dead, nor will it be in the foreseeable future. It does however, like any art form, take time to grow.

David Flitner
North Andover, Mass.

Father Doesn't Know Best

The statement that 44 percent of children aged four to six prefer television to Daddy is no inculpation of TV ["The Beast in the Box," April 1]; it is the sad result of the Absent Father Syndrome.

My biggest problem in treating behavioral problems in children is getting the father to realize that his children need his time, love, and attention—even before the job, the newspaper, golf, booze with the boys, TV football, and so forth.

Dr. Glenn Stouti
Louisville, Ky.

Survival Training

I am grateful to *SR* for the article by Ann Kliman ["An Ounce of Prevention ... The New Frontier in Psychiatric First Aid," April 15].

When my husband died suddenly at age thirty-six, three years ago, I was thirty-three and found myself alone with two young children. It was suggested that I call the Center for Preventive Psychiatry in White Plains and speak to Ann Kliman. My response: "Why? My husband is dead, and she can't bring him back to life!" With skepticism, I did telephone the center, and I made arrangements to see Kliman.

She explained to me that mourning is work. At the time I didn't understand what she meant; I felt only anger, fear, sorrow, and pain. But as the months passed, I came to grips with what had happened to me, thanks to her help.

My feelings were not unique; but I was fortunate to have found someone like Kliman to help me become a strong and independent person. It still isn't easy, even now, but Kliman is only a telephone call away. I hope her book *In Crisis: Psychological Aid for Recovery and Growth* will make it easier for others to discuss death openly and freely.

Barbara Rothenberg
White Plains, N.Y.

Editor's Note: The exhibit "Abstract Expressionism: The Formative Years" ["The Durability of Abstract Expressionism," May 27] was jointly organized by the Whitney Museum of Art and the Herbert F. Johnson Museum, at Cornell University. It was made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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Using a Lawyer May Be Dangerous to your Wealth

I'm a lawyer myself—and I may be cutting my own throat—but I'm going to tell you the truth:

The bulk of what most lawyers do could be done by someone who had never seen the inside of a law school—and usually is.

Lawyer's *secretaries* do most of the work on wills, divorces (as well as annulments and legal separations), bankruptcies and creditor plans, simple contracts, real estate deals (buying, selling, and leasing), run-of-the-mill personal injury cases, adoptions, filing homesteads, insurance claims, minor criminal cases . . . and the list goes on and on.

And what do these Legal Secretaries do? They follow directions and fill in the blanks on forms. That's all. It's as simple as that.

That's why I think you may be ready to try being your *own* lawyer—and save a 'ton' of money.

But before you decide, answer these two questions: (1) Can you follow simple directions—no more complicated than assembling a Christmas toy or reading a cook book? (2) Do you have the few cents necessary to buy the correct forms at a Legal Stationery Store?

If your answer to both of those questions is "yes," you're *ready*. Well, *almost* ready. There are just two more things you should know:

(1) You don't necessarily have to have "the few cents necessary to buy the correct form at a Legal Stationery Store." Because I'll tell you how and where to get many of these forms *free*.

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The book took more than a year to write. Based on what I've actually been earning in my law practice, that represents more than $100,000 worth of advice.

I mention that, not to brag, but so you'll know that I'm not some kid, fresh out of law school, and hungry for a few bucks. Along that line, you should know that I've been practicing for 13 years, and I've written the book about the legal problems I work with, day in and day out.

Some other things you might want to know: I've published technical legal articles that explain the law—to lawyers. I've served as a research assistant to a Judge of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

What will it cost you to "hire" a lawyer with those qualifications? Ten dollars. Just about what I—and lots of other lawyers—would charge you for 10 *minutes* of legal advice.

Why so cheap? Because I hope to sell a million copies—or at least enough so I can take some time off and enjoy life with my family.

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And here's just a sample of what's in it for *you* (including complete directions and sample forms you can practice with):

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How to handle an adoption . . . page 99

How to dissolve your marriage . . . page 113

How to solve debt problems—from consumer-credit counseling to bankruptcy . . . page 127

How to draft a contract . . . page 209

How to handle real estate transactions . . . page 216

How you can use a Law Library—free—to avoid probate! . . . save taxes! . . . form a corporation! . . . and handle hundreds of other matters! . . . page 25

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FRONT RUNNERS

Heather Taylor

Pot Shots

Do you think of Hawaii as an Eden more or less free of the drug culture that has corrupted the mainland? Then hear this: Hawaii is now so heavily into pot growing that the heisting of marijuana crops—complete with help from spotter planes—has become a major activity. When a plane's pilot spots a likely-looking stand of hemp, he radios its exact location to rustlers on the ground, who move in smartly and rip off the plants in minutes.

The victimized pot farmers can hardly go running to the police, so they have taken to protecting their crops with shotguns and hunting rifles—many of them aimed skyward at the planes that make the rustling possible. Since the airborne rustlers can't for their part complain about being shot at, a mini-civil war had till recently raged on in semisecrecy.

Then a team of U.S. Geological Survey scientists innocently flew over the Puna district—home of a kind of marijuana known as "Puna butter"—and began taking infrared photos of the area around a local volcano, in hopes of predicting its next eruption. Seeing the plane skimming along just overhead, the pot farmers leaped to conclusions and, hopping mad, cut loose with their rifles. One .30-caliber bullet pierced the plane's fuselage and just missed one of the scientists—and the fat was in the fire. Now Puna is under police surveillance, and both rustlers and farmers are cooling it.

Second Coming

Remember S.1, the repressive criminal code bill that the Senate passed several years ago and that the House is still sitting on? Well, if you hated S.1, you'll loathe its doppelgänger, Senate Bill 1437, which passed the Senate in January and is now being studied by the House.

Incredibly, the bill defines as "obscene" and "unmailable" *all proabortion literature*. The penalty for such mailings can be a jail sentence of up to five years or a fine of $100,000 for an individual, or $500,000 for an organization.

If this bill becomes the law of the land, protesters, strikers, demonstrators, and dissenters of all sorts will find themselves subject to unprecedented rough handling at the whim of authorities: The goodies embedded deep in the bill's "language" include preventive detention, discretionary denial of pretrial release on bail, vague "dragnet" definitions of criminal conspiracy, entrapment procedures, and effective denial of *Miranda*-mandated warnings to defendants of their rights.

As writer Nat Hentoff has pointed out in the New York newspaper *The Village Voice*, the irony is that S.1437's passage through the Senate was greatly eased because Senator Edward Kennedy, a putative liberal, backed it all the way. However, Kennedy's colleague Senator Alan Cranston said while he was unsuccessfully opposing S. 1437 that it gives the Justice Department "a monolithic prosecutorial and investigative jurisdiction capable of reaching virtually every nook and cranny of American life."

The Devil Strikes Out

What do Soviet scientists think of the Bermuda Triangle mystery? Not much. The Soviets, it seems, first got interested in the "Devil's Backyard" in 1970, when their research trawlers in the triangle area came upon mega-whirlpools measuring up to 120 miles in diameter. Reasoning that these gigantic vortexes might be sucking ships down to their doom and might even be creating upper-air turbulence capable of downing planes, the USSR two years ago joined the United States, Britain, France, and Canada in studying "the structure of the ocean and the atmosphere in the Bermuda Triangle area."

The result: reams of scientific data but no sign at all of undersea kingdoms, death rays from outer space, or other spooky stuff. A Soviet spokesman dismissed the claims of supernatural goings-on in the triangle as mere "indulging in the human weakness for sensationalism." As oceanographer Leonid Brekhovskikh put it, "There is nothing mysterious in the ocean except its hugeness, which is very difficult to imagine. There are many unsolved problems.. more interesting than myths about supernatural happenings."

Do You Read Me?

Educators are talking about a new drug treatment that supposedly makes junior read better. New York psychiatrist Dr. Harold N. Levinson, who developed the treatment, claims that since 1974 he has batted better than .500 in treating children labeled poor readers. Many of the drugs he uses are, Levinson told *Learning* magazine, primarily known as anti-motion sickness remedies, and medical reference books warn of possibly unfortunate side effects. But the psychiatrist waves away such contentions and says that the drugs may at worst leave students a bit fatigued while increasing their reading effectiveness by enhancing "cerebellar-vestibular function and modulation." How's that, again? "It's like kicking a radio [that doesn't work]," Dr. Levinson patiently explains. "Sometimes [the kicking helps], but you don't really know why."

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GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER: OUR DISASTROUS COURT SYSTEM

by Nicholas Scoppetta

"Public entertainments in which the climax of the mystery story was the arrest of the guilty party bewildered me because in the real world an arrest rarely ends anything."

—James Q. Wilson
Thinking About Crime

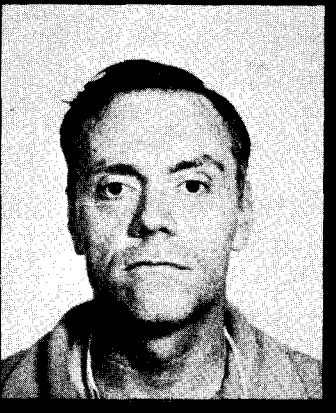
CRIME IS VERY MUCH WITH US. We read about it, talk about it, think about it—and we experience it. Last year, the police made over 240,000 arrests in New York City alone, and four other cities in the United States have higher crime rates than New York has. Complaints reporting crimes were five times that number—but no one knows for sure how many crimes are being committed, since so many go unreported. Besieged by this onslaught of criminal activity, the public has long surmised that governments' attempts to control crime are not terribly effective. These suspicions have, in fact, lately been more than confirmed by objective studies that, fortunately, point the way to much-needed changes in our criminal justice system.

Until a few years ago, we had no way of accurately measuring the performance of that system. But now and for the first time, computer-assisted analysis by the Institute for Law and Social Research (INSLAW) has given us a statistically accurate picture of our criminal justice system and particularly of what happens to people after they have been arrested.

I have worked in criminal justice for some 19 years, during which time I have served as a state and federal prosecutor and more recently as New York City's deputy mayor for criminal justice. Though I had assumed this experience would give me a realistic view of the system's inadequacies, I nonetheless found many of the results of the INSLAW studies surprising.

It didn't surprise me to learn from the INSLAW studies that our criminal justice system is inefficient, costly, and mostly ineffective: in sum, that it doesn't work. But what I didn't expect is the extent to which it doesn't work in cities across the country.

The People v. Charles Yukl



In 1966, Charles Yukl strangled Susan Reynolds and mutilated her body. Pleading guilty to manslaughter, he was sentenced to from seven and a half to fifteen years in jail. In June 1973, he was released on parole. During the following summer, he lured Karin Schlegel to his Greenwich Village apartment and strangled her. Jailed for this crime, Yukl will be eligible in fifteen years for parole consideration.

The studies show that most defendants arrested for serious crimes will go free. In more than half the cases, the prosecutor will simply drop the charges. In another significant percentage, the defendant will plead guilty to a lesser charge and will receive a suspended sentence, although occasionally his guilty plea will earn him a short jail term. Most of the remaining cases will be referred to such "diversion" projects as drug rehabilitation centers, "work" programs, or other social agencies. In a few instances, the defendant will actually be tried for the crime he was arrested for, and of those tried, even fewer will be jailed. However, in the very

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act of documenting the system's considerable shortcomings, INSLAW is also providing us with the outlines of a program for reform.

Under the auspices of INSLAW, many prosecutors' offices across the country have computerized their record-keeping systems. Designed primarily to help these attorneys manage their personnel and resources more efficiently, the Prosecutors Management Information System, known by the acronym PROMIS, is also proving to be a boon to analysts of the criminal justice system. For the first time, all of the myriad details of the criminal justice process are easily retrievable for examination and evaluation.

Perhaps the most alarming revelation to emerge from the analyses is the astonishingly high number of cases that are dismissed outright by prosecutors. For example, during the first six months of 1977, more than half of all persons arrested in Los Angeles for felonies had the charges against them dismissed. During the same time period, New Orleans dismissed about 6 out of every 10 felony arrests; and Salt Lake City and Washington, D.C., dismissed about 5 out of every 10. In New York City, dismissals occur in about 4 out of every 10 felony arrests.

Through PROMIS and systems like it, INSLAW has been able to identify some of the reasons for these high dismissal rates: Often, sloppy police work results in a failure to record accurately witnesses' names and addresses or to recover physical evidence properly. Then too, witnesses fail to appear—some because they are reluctant to become involved and others simply because they have not been properly notified. And due process considerations, such as unlawful searches or improperly obtained admissions, frequently cause cases to be dismissed "on a technicality."

However, most of the cases being dismissed are those that most prosecutors feel don't belong in the criminal court in the first place and in which there is usually some interpersonal relationship between the victims and the defendants—husbands and wives, landlords and tenants, prostitutes and pimps, store owners and customers, and lovers, neighbors, or in-laws—in short, people who knew each other or who came together in some transaction in the course of which the crime was committed. In these situations, there are often extenuating circumstances that have a considerable effect on the cases' disposition in court.

Take the case of a customer who finds that his local dry cleaner is unable to locate his suit. An argument breaks out, and the customer pushes the store owner, who pushes back and in the ensuing struggle crashes against a glass showcase, shattering it and cutting his hand. The police are called, and the customer is arrested and charged with assault as well as with a variety of lesser charges stemming from the damage done to the showcase.

By the time the case gets to court and is ready for a hearing, tempers will have cooled. Likewise, time lost from work while waiting in court for the case to be called will further dampen the complainant's ardor. In all likelihood, he will have no interest in seeing the person he is accusing jailed or tried on criminal charges. He simply will want his showcase repaired and his doctor bill paid. Eventually, an assistant prosecutor will find the time to evaluate the case and question the store owner. The attorney will quickly realize he has a witness who wants nothing more to do with this matter and who is reluctant to come back to court "one more time" on the off chance a trial can be held that may result in a conviction but that will in all likelihood produce no payment for damages. Typically, the prosecutor will then allow the complainant to withdraw the charges, and the case will be dismissed. The customer may or may not have his lost suit returned, and the store owner will have to pay for the damage himself. Not only has valuable court time been taken up needlessly but both parties leave frustrated, angry, and disillusioned with the system.

Cases like these, where there is no prior intent to commit a crime, do not ordinarily lend themselves to successful criminal prosecution and almost always end up in a dismissal or in a plea to a much lesser charge with a suspended sentence. Yet they account for approximately half of the volume of arrests and come into the courts at a staggering cost to the system in terms of police, prosecutor, and court time, all of which are diverted from the truly serious criminal cases.

Almost all the actual convictions come about as a result of plea-bargaining. By this process, a direct result of the enormous volume of cases pouring into the criminal justice system, a defendant pleads guilty to a crime less serious than the one charged in exchange for a more lenient sentence, thereby enabling prosecutors to dispose of tens of thousands of cases that they have neither the resources nor the time to try. Of the more than 100,000 felony arrests made each year in New York City, only slightly more than 3,000 of them are tried to verdict by a court and jury. The other 97,000 or more cases either are dismissed, diverted for some noncriminal disposition, or disposed of through plea-bargaining. Furthermore, of all the defendants convicted of felonies, either through trials or pleas, less than 4,000 are likely to go to state prison on sentences of one year or more, and most of these defendants are likely to be back on the streets in short order. The average time actually served in state prison is less than 26 months.

The net result of this processing of great numbers of persons by the police, courts, and prosecutors is *a continual*

The People v. Joseph Bernard Morse

When he was eighteen, Joseph Bernard Morse picked up a large rock and bashed in his mother's head. Then he beat his invalid sister to death with a baseball bat. All this happened in San Diego, in 1962.

In 1964, while he was serving a life sentence for killing his mother, Morse murdered a fellow inmate by strangling him with a garrote improvised from twine. For this murder, Morse was given a second life sentence.

Last year, after many sessions with Morse, a psychological tester concluded that the prisoner's potential for violence was low, *provided everything was going his way*. More recently, a psychiatrist reported that Morse is "antisocial" but that he should nevertheless be paroled and watched to see what happens.

As things stand, Morse will be paroled next year.

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"Perhaps the most alarming revelation to emerge from the analyses is the astonishingly high number of cases that are dismissed outright by prosecutors."

recycling of the criminal population, with little or no effect on them or on the crime rate.

Repeat offenders account for an extraordinary number of reported crimes. One INSLAW study dealt with 45,575 persons arrested in Washington, D.C., for serious crimes committed over a 56-month period. The study found that among 7 percent of these defendants, each had been arrested four or more times, which accounted for 24 percent of all arrests made during the period.

Reports are replete with examples of the system's failure to deal with the repeat offender: In one instance I know of, a burglary suspect was arrested and freed on bail 11 times in 17 months without standing trial; in another, a suspected thief and forger was arrested and freed on bail 17 times in 30 months without once being tried. In one jurisdiction, 10 persons committed in less than one year 274 crimes—including 200 burglaries, 60 rapes, and 14 murders. In New York State, analysts have concluded that 80 percent of all solved crimes are committed by recidivists.

That this revolving door syndrome is doing little to control crime is to state the obvious. What effective reforms can be instituted, however, is not so obvious. The traditional response of most elected officials to rising crime rates is to call for more police to make more arrests and for more prosecutors and judges to try those arrested. Though more resources may help, studies by INSLAW and other groups have raised serious questions as to just how effectively we use the considerable resources now devoted to fighting crime. The often-quoted Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment, conducted by the Police Foundation, in 1976, came to the conclusion that preventive patrol—that is, police officers' showing their presence on foot patrol or in marked cars to prevent crimes—has little or no effect on reported crime or on the ability of the police to apprehend wrongdoers.

A closer look at the productivity of the individual police officer is also in order. An examination of all arrests made by Washington, D.C., police officers in 1974 shows that only 15 percent of the arresting officers accounted for *half* of all arrests leading to convictions. Finding out what these extraordinarily effective police officers are doing that the other 85 percent are not might lead to a decrease in the 70-percent dismissal rate for serious crimes that Washington experienced that year.

When one also examines productivity in the courts, one finds similarly depressing statistics. In 1976, the Economic Development Council (EDC) of New York City released a study of how court time was being utilized to prosecute felonies in two of the busiest counties in New York. What emerged was a picture of wasteful underutilization of court time—a picture that was an indictment more of the entire criminal justice system than of the courts and the court administrators. While it is true that EDC's analysts found that the average time judges were spending on the bench in court was three hours and three minutes each day, it was also determined that these same judges were forced to waste an hour and 14 minutes each day because of poor administration in other parts of the system.*

Judges were kept idle as they waited for defendants to be brought before them from detention facilities; witnesses either failed to appear or were not notified that they were due in court; defense counsel failed to show up, alleging that they had conflicts in scheduling; police officers were unavailable; and prosecutors were often not prepared to proceed. In short, for at least one hour and 14 minutes a day, supreme court time in New York City was being lost because of inefficient system-wide planning and administration, at an enormous cost to the public. EDC's analysts calculated that a single hour of supreme court time, city-wide, represents a cost of $21.5 million. That's enough to pay for an additional 37 courtrooms, fully staffed. Occasionally, exceptional judges such as Harold Rothwax [see page 14] are able to overcome the system's lack of coordination. But the system cannot of course be premised on the availability of large numbers of such gifted judges.

FORTUNATELY, THERE IS A POSITIVE SIDE to the unhappy picture of law enforcement emerging from these studies: In the very act of identifying the system's shortcomings for the first time, the studies also provide the basis and impetus for real reforms. Because of their broad-based, objective, computer-analyzed findings, the INSLAW studies in particular leave little room for administrators to do anything but implement change.

Any attempts at reform should begin with the recognition that the criminal justice system *rarely functions as a system*: Police, prosecutors, courts, and other components of the "system" often seek to advance their own interests, without regard for the effects on the other areas of law enforcement. Thus, the police argue for more resources without regard for the fact that the courts are being overwhelmed by the number of arrests already being made; the probation services are being cut to reduce budget costs, and the cuts hold up the delivery of probation presentence reports, which unnecessarily detains prisoners in expensive presentence facilities; and fully staffed courtrooms are meanwhile kept idle because efficient system-wide procedures do not exist. The fact is that a criminal prosecution must be viewed as a continuum that involves a victim and a defendant interacting with police, prosecutor, defense counsel, court, and prison officials and with probation and parole personnel.

It is also essential that *system-wide budgeting* be done. The annual competition for funds that now goes on among criminal justice agencies in most cities results in an inequitable distribution of scarce resources.

Clearly, for a criminal justice system to be effective, it must be viewed in its entirety, with due regard for system-wide planning and coordination. For this reason, every large city should have a criminal justice coordinator's office similar to the office now functioning in New York City. The coordinator should be of sufficiently high rank in the administration (in

*The EDC report suggests that a productive court day includes approximately five hours on-bench time. This figure recognizes that many out-of-court duties, such as reading motion papers, writing reports and opinions, and doing research, make demands on a judge's time.

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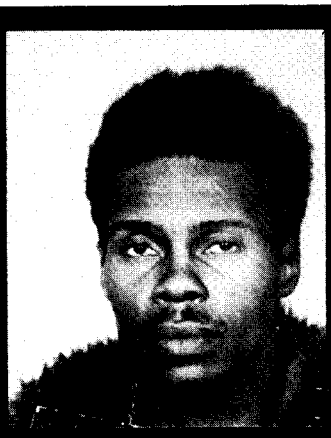
The People v. Joseph Holloway



In 1971, on the East Side of Manhattan, Joseph Holloway held up at knifepoint a seventy-one-year-old banker and his wife. Jailed for this crime, Holloway broke down and confessed to a rape-burglary, and on August 8, 1972, he was given concurrent sentences of from 4 to 12 years for these crimes. Enrolled in a work-release program in 1975, he promptly committed two armed robberies, and when he was paroled in January 1976, he committed within the space of three months four more armed robberies—two of them involving sexual abuse of his victims. The police finally ended his spree by catching up with him in March 1976, and in 1977 he was given a sentence of from 10 to 21 years. Because of a legal technicality his sentence will be completed by 1981.

New York, the position is filled by a deputy mayor) to deal appropriately with all of the principals in criminal justice.

Every city with a significant volume of criminal cases should install a management information system such as INSLAW's PROMIS. This is essential if local law enforcement agencies are to manage their resources properly. Such systems not only identify inefficient operations but also provide the basis for correcting them. Likewise they provide the basis for a rational ordering of priorities for police, prosecutors, and courts.

Using programs such as PROMIS, a concentrated effort should be made to focus the full force of the criminal justice system on the repeat offender. As the INSLAW studies mentioned above demonstrate abundantly, a relatively small percentage of defendants account for a disproportionate number of arrests. Computer record-keeping systems can identify the chronic offender. Once this is done, he or she should be singled out for special attention. At the same time, less serious cases, such as those in which there is an interpersonal relationship between the parties, should be diverted from the criminal courts and treated administratively. Using lay arbitrators, dispute centers such as those now operating in New York and elsewhere can mediate among the disputants in these cases. This practice will result in a saving of the valuable time and resources of the court system while concurrently providing a forum in which the parties may reach a meaningful resolution. Armed with the authority to file civil court money judgments, these centers can often provide the remedy the parties really seek.

Finally, some of the fundamental premises upon which the system is built are in serious need of reform. The present indeterminate-sentencing structure that exists in most states is based on the dubious premise that large numbers of defendants are rehabilitated while they are in prison. Thus, in New York State a judge is empowered to set an indeterminate sentence of from 1 to 15 years. The parole board may release the defendant anytime after he has served one year—presumably when he is rehabilitated or when he is "cured" of his antisocial behavior. This process has resulted in short prison terms and not many cures: As noted above, in New York State the average time served in state prison is less than 26 months, and recidivists are responsible for *80 percent* of solved crimes.

Indeterminate sentences should be scrapped, then, in favor of a more realistic sentencing structure such as that proposed for the federal courts in a bill now pending before Congress. A commission that would set definite sentences within narrowly prescribed limits and within legislatively established maximums should be established. Thus, for example, an armed robbery might still have a legislatively prescribed maximum sentence of 25 years, with a definite or "presumed" sentence of from 6 to 8 years set by the commission. Under this system, the court could go above or below the presumed sentence but would have to state its reasons for doing so. Any punishment above the presumed sentence could be appealed by the defendant, and any below, by the prosecutor. Parole as it now exists would be abolished, except that it might be retained as an adjunct to the trial court's stipulation, for instance, of a sentence of six years, with two on parole. This structure has appeal in that it would provide specific guidance for trial courts while preserving court discretion for the exceptional case. It would also place sentencing responsibility squarely with the courts, where it belongs. An appellate court, rather than the parole board, would thus act as the balance wheel of the system.

Other reforms are badly needed. In jurisdictions across the country, judges are too often selected primarily on the strength of political considerations, with little regard paid to legal scholarship and abilities. In most states, mechanisms for disciplining or removing inept judges are either nonexistent or so cumbersome or expensive to initiate that they are rarely used.

Case processing must be made more efficient so that we can reduce the time it takes to bring an arrested person to trial. The system should strive for swift and certain punishment as a likely deterrent to crime. We must better manage and coordinate the court system toward this end so as to increase trial capacity and to reduce the necessity for prosecutors to rely so heavily on plea-bargaining.

The most important reform we can initiate, however, is a change in the perspective we bring to the control and prosecution of crime. We must learn what *really* works and discard those notions we have about what *ought* to work.

The control and reduction of crime in urban America have proved to be elusive goals. The criminal defendant is after all the end product of our social and economic ills. Given the complexities of the causes of crime, it is undoubtedly true that the public's expectations of law enforcement's role in achieving these goals are unreasonably high. Still, it is plain that the system performs far below its potential and that a frightened and much put-upon public has a right to demand more effective law enforcement than it is getting. We in America have lived for so long with pervasive crime as a fact of life that perhaps we have ceased to believe it can be otherwise. An efficient and effective law enforcement system would go a long way toward restoring that belief. ◉

Nicholas Scoppetta is the former deputy mayor for criminal justice and commissioner of investigation for the city of New York.

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ISSUES

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN: THE GENIUS OF JUDGE HAROLD ROTHWAX

by Loudon Wainwright

SEATED BEHIND an elevated desk in the high-ceilinged courtroom, Judge Harold Rothwax does not look at all pleased. His broad face, an appealing face with something of the lumpy quality of an old prizefighter's, is set and pale, and his head is pulled down between his shoulders. The two lawyers before him—a young assistant district attorney clutching a confusion of documents and a defense counsel whose brown toupee gleams in contrast to his own dull sideburns—place their hands on the massive desk and seem to brace themselves against his next words. A few spectators stare from the high-backed wooden benches, and in the well of the court, the clerks and uniformed officers are still.

At a table perhaps 20 feet from the judge and behind the lawyers, the defendant stands waiting. He is a handsome white man in his early thirties, and his face above the light turtleneck projects a kind of distaste, as if his straight nose were picking up bad odors at this tawdry proceeding. But he has been in such surroundings many times before. As his record attests, he is a specialist in burglarizing the rooms of first-class hotels, and he often carries a gun to impress anyone unfortunate enough to discover him. He is, in short, a dangerous thief whose devotion to his work led most recently to his capture on one job while he was out on bail after another. He uses different names for different occasions, and he is in bad trouble this morning.

"Tell the defendant," says Judge Rothwax to the defense attorney, in a voice that cannot be heard beyond his desk, "that this is the last day for three and a half to seven. After this, it goes up. If he's going to take the offer, he has to decide now. If he doesn't take it, he's going to trial. We've had enough of this delay. Either he takes the plea, or we set a trial date *today*."

The lawyer looks at the judge for a moment without speaking and then turns and walks back to his client. It is clear that Rothwax is not going to tolerate further stalling. The defendant either must plead guilty to the reduced burglary charge offered by the district attorney—for which Rothwax had earlier indicated he would hand down a sentence of no more than three and a half to seven years in prison—or must prepare to go to trial. Then if a jury convicts him on the original charge (and the prosecution's case seems very good), the trial judge will surely give him a much heavier sentence. And if the defendant wants to delay now and enter a plea later, to avoid trial, the bargain offered today will be unavailable. This is the hard moment of truth in the plea-bargaining process for the handsome burglar, and his face, empty now of any disdain, is taut and angry. He speaks in a rapid whisper to his attorney, stares at Rothwax, shrugs and whispers to his lawyer again.

The lawyer comes back to the bench. "This guy is crazy," he says to Rothwax. "We'll go to trial."

"All right, gentlemen," the judge says briskly. "Let's settle on a date certain for trial."

"Judge, I'd like to be relieved of this case," says the defense lawyer. "This guy won't listen."

Rothwax shakes his head. "No," he replies. "You're the fourth lawyer he's had. That's enough. Let's pick a trial date." It is clear that there is no more room for discussion on this matter. A day two weeks later is selected. The defendant is taken out of the courtroom and back into detention. His case, of course, may still never go to trial, but it has been brought one step closer, largely because of pressure brought by Judge Rothwax. The calendar proceeds.

At forty-seven, Harold Rothwax is a most effective judge not just because of his impressive qualities of intellect, fairness, and knowledge of the criminal law but also because of his rare ability to keep cases moving toward final disposition in a terribly overburdened court system. Nearly 100,000 cases a year come before the New York City criminal court in Manhattan alone, and 5,000 of these result in felony indictments that go on to a higher court. Rothwax is actually a judge of the lower court, but his skills have caused his judicial bosses to place him on the higher bench, as an acting justice of the state supreme court. There he can bring his truly formidable energy and determination to the prompt settlement of more serious cases, involving more complex issues of the law.

Rothwax works in what is called a "calendar part" of the court, a place where many cases are brought before the judge each day. His court is quite unlike the trial parts—which most people think of in connection with criminal justice—where judges preside over one jury trial after another. Different courts call for different techniques of operation, and although Rothwax likes to conduct trials, he is particularly good at the fast-paced, detailed work of running a calendar part, where expert trial judges often get hopelessly bogged down. In Rothwax's court, a succession of matters involving all sorts of serious crimes and alleged criminals, both in and out of jail, are paraded before him. The cases are generally not new, that is, they have been in the court system for some time—several months, even a year—and it is Rothwax's job to push them along toward a solution.

To do this often requires a varying mixture of ingenuity, bluntness, and tact, a blend the judge achieves with remarkable success. He accomplishes the task too with less of

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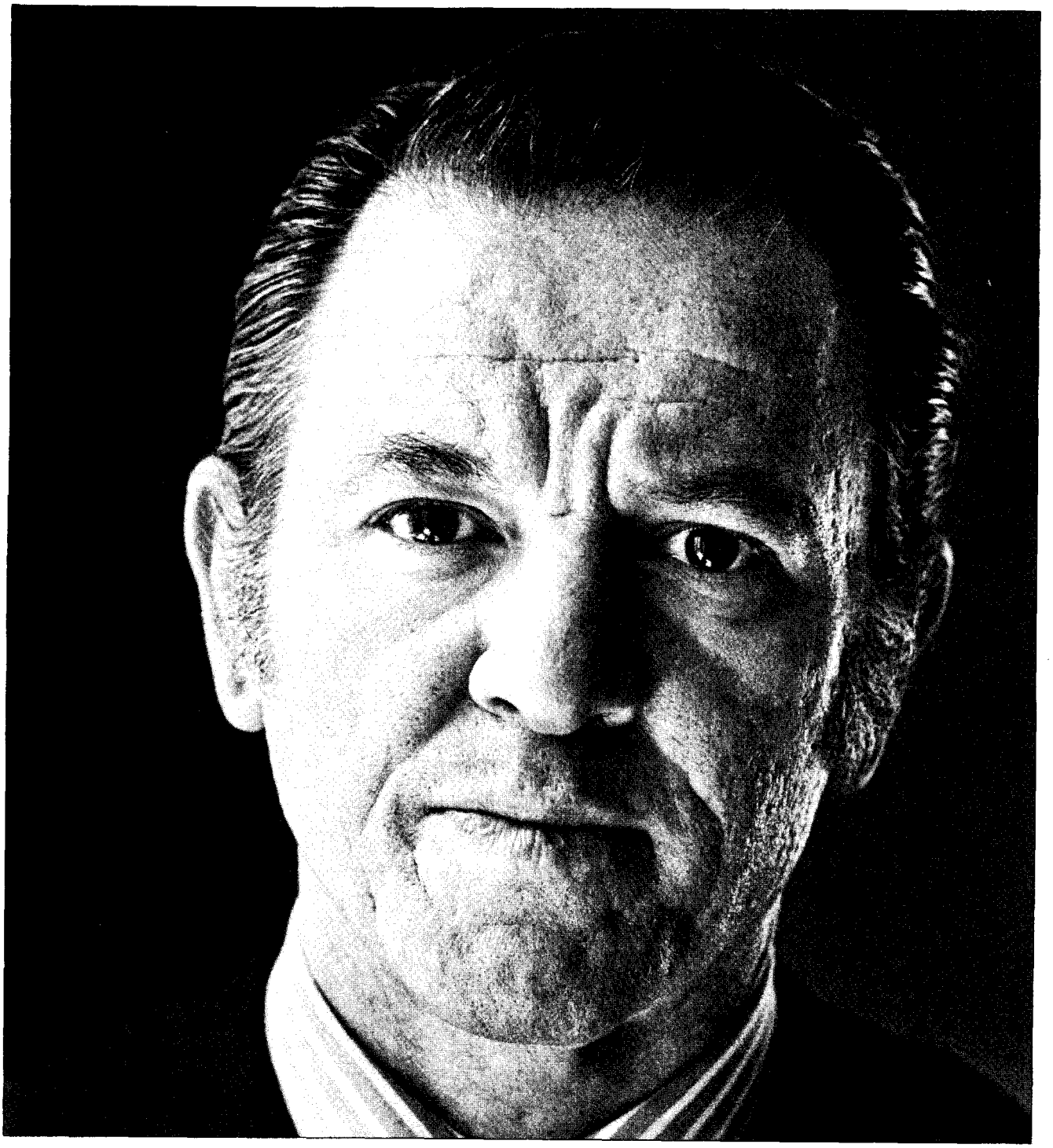

a display of his often-raw nerve endings than occasionally bloomed when he was in the lower court. There, for more than three years he dealt with as many as 80 cases a day. Now, in the relative calm of the state supreme court, he seldom hears more than 25. Unlike the judges in some courts who seem almost helpless figures in chaotic charades of justice, Rothwax quite literally dominates the proceedings before him. He seems always in charge, and functionaries of all sorts tiptoe around him with care, not wanting to draw his pained look or sharp comment. The judge runs a tight courtroom—he describes the ideal as "a quiet courtroom, a dignified courtroom, in which you seem to be seeking truth in a careful, responsible way"—and everybody knows it.

While he is aware of the commanding image he cuts—and naturally takes some pleasure in it—Rothwax understands the limits of his job. "The feeling," he says during a recess in his chambers, "that a judge is an all-powerful figure can only be held by someone who's never been in the court system. A good part of a judge's function is that of a traffic manager, a manager who tries to see that a great number of things come together at the same time so that something can happen with the case. But even the best judge is constantly frustrated by his inability to make these things happen. Extraordinary coordination between all sorts of people and agencies is required before anything can take place.

"Still," Rothwax goes on, "I try to communicate that I am

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" 'Judges and prosecutors,' wrote Rothwax, 'are "ring wise" but indifferent to the larger social implications about how well the court system performs.' "

determined that these things will happen, that I expect they will happen, and that they are going to happen. I try to convey the impression that I will not greet kindly anyone's failure to do his part in the system." To convey this impression requires that Rothwax be prepared at all times to insist on prompt, sensible, and orderly work performances by clerks, bailiffs, corrections officers (who produce the jailed defendants), probation officers, police officers, translators, court stenographers, representatives of various rehabilitation services, and especially by the lawyers for both the people and the defendant. "The impulse of a good calendar judge," he explains, "is to get the case resolved and out of the system at the earliest possible moment. But complicated procedures must be correctly followed. So the judge spends a good deal of time making sure that both sides are doing what they ought to be doing. He spends a lot of time banging heads."

ROTHWAX is conspicuously well qualified to do just that. After six years as an aggressive and imaginative defense attorney for New York's Legal Aid Society, he left that job to become director of legal services for the big urban agency Mobilization for Youth, and he has been a professor at Columbia Law School since 1970. Just months before Mayor John Lindsay appointed him to the criminal court in that year, Rothwax wrote a report on the court that included evaluations of the qualifications of the judges sitting there. It was remarkable for its blunt candor about virtually everyone who was working in the criminal justice system.

"The judges and the prosecutors," he wrote, "are often experienced,but they usually are poorly trained for the position they occupy. They are 'ring wise' but either unaware [of] or indifferent to the larger human and social implications about how well the court system performs; they often point to its failures to explain their own shortcomings." Rothwax characterized the poor quality of appointments to the criminal bench as "pervasive and devastating" and went on to comment that there existed "a failure of will and imagination, a lack of coordination and an absence of spirit on the parts of the administrators of the court, the district attorneys, and the Legal Aid Society." Little escaped his scathing notice, and he got appointed as a judge in spite of the fact that he had also characterized members of the mayor's screening committee as "estimable and honorable men" who had "consciously approved [judicial candidates] whom they know to be unacceptable."

Seven years on the bench have mellowed Rothwax somewhat and have made him a little more patient with the uneven performance of the professionals who appear before him. But he is still fierce in the battle against the crushing volume of cases.

"A calendar judge," he says, "is not passive. He does not take frustration easily. If I have been promised the minutes of an earlier hearing and then am told they are not ready at the appointed time, I do not simply accept the bad news. I pursue the matter. I find out why they are not ready. I say I want those minutes done as soon as possible—I want them the next day. And I make the lawyers pursue it. If the prosecutor tells me that his police officer, the man who arrested the defendant, is on vacation, I want to know why he hasn't anticipated this, why he didn't know about the vacation schedule from the very start of the case. If this is a case we simply must move, I say let's find out where the officer is on vacation and let's bring him in."

Being a good calendar judge involves more than efficient traffic management. Much depends on a judge's ability to bring both sides to an agreement, an agreement whose central condition is that the defendant plead guilty without demanding his right to a trial. This, of course, is plea-bargaining, and in New York State, judges can actively participate in the process. In the federal courts, as in the courts of most of the other states, judges can only ratify agreements between the prosecutor and the defense. But no matter what the judge's role, it is a vital part of the criminal justice process, and without it, the courts simply could not function.

About his role in plea-bargaining, Rothwax stresses the importance of proper evaluation. "I must determine," he says, "the value of each case, how it is ultimately going to come out if the defendant decides to test the system and go to trial.

"Knowing the worth of a case," he continues, "is a compound of many things, of getting the answers to many questions. From the prosecutor's point of view, is this a strong case? Can he actually prove it? Can he get all his evidence in—or has some been illegally obtained?

"Then there are the personalities involved. What kind of lawyers am I dealing with? Is this prosecutor a good trial lawyer who is willing, even anxious, to take this case all the way? Or is he a guy who is gun-shy about trials and would prefer some disposition short of that? Is this a defense attorney who is effective and dedicated? Is he knowledgeable in the law? Or is he lazy?

"In the case of a serious crime where the defendant has other felony convictions, the district attorney holds the bargaining leverage. He can make an offer and stick to it, and the law involving multiple felonies gives me no scope in sentencing. But most often this is not the case. The mandatory sentencing provisions do not apply, and there are choices possible. The DA may say that he will not make a plea offer lower than a B felony [an A is the most serious]. The defense attorney may respond that he doesn't care about labels—B, C, D—that all he is concerned with is the amount of time I'm going to give his client. And with a B felony, I have a scope of anywhere from three years to twenty-five years. We can move toward an agreement.

"In one case I had recently," the judge continues, "the defendant was a burglar of long experience. The case was a strong one: The defendant had been found in the complainant's bed—where he had crawled in great pain after falling from the penthouse roof in the course of the burglary and breaking both legs.

"The assistant DA had the case ready to go to trial and would take no plea less than a C felony. Because the guy was a prior felon, I had no discretion in sentencing and would have to give him from three to six years in prison. Under the circumstances, I thought a sentence of two to four years would be sufficient. I felt the breaking of his legs had effected some kind of change within him. And he had reached the age of forty, well past the peak for a cat burglar. Aging is the one sure cure we have for crime.

"But the young DA would not reduce the charge," Roth-

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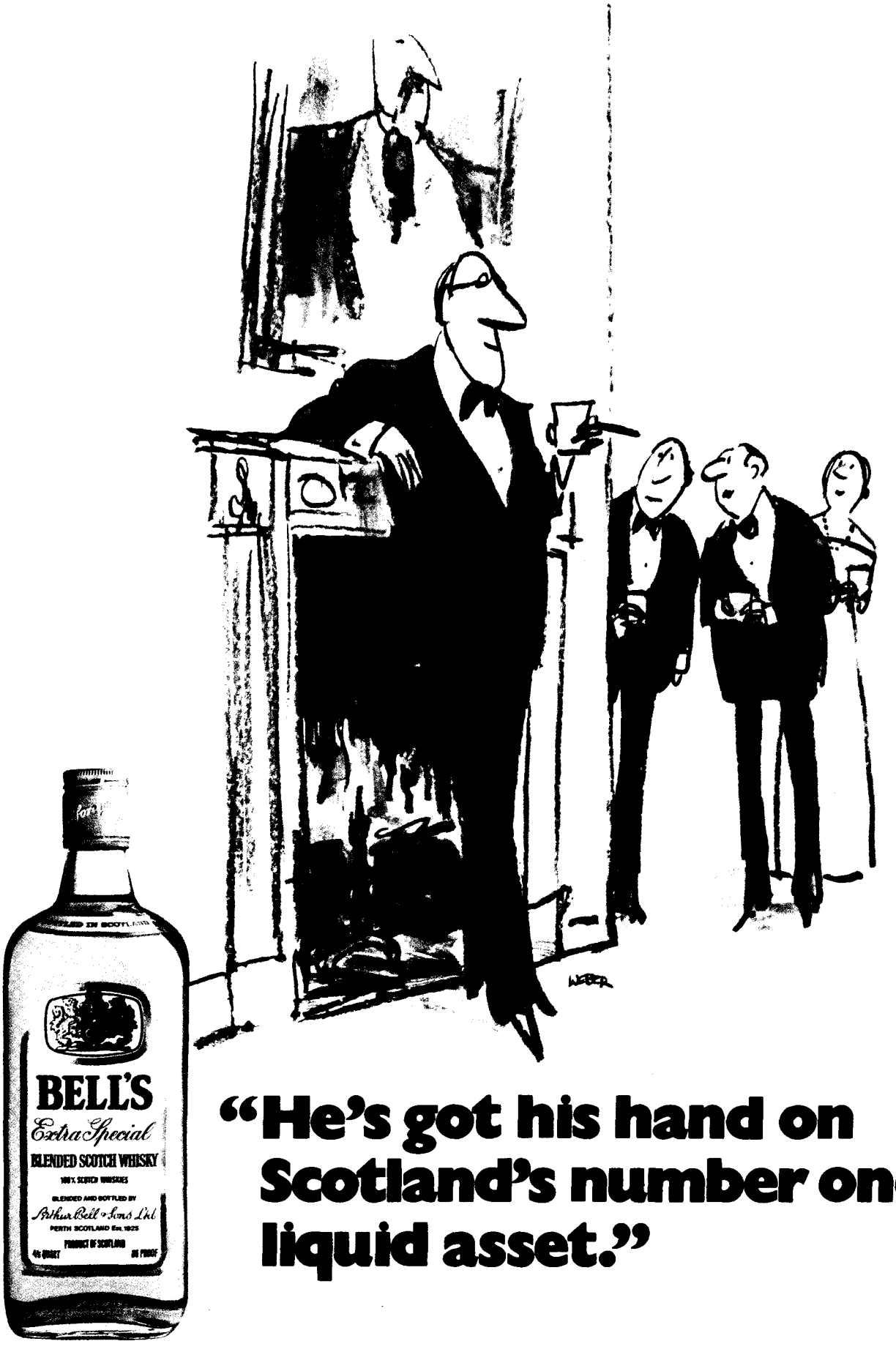

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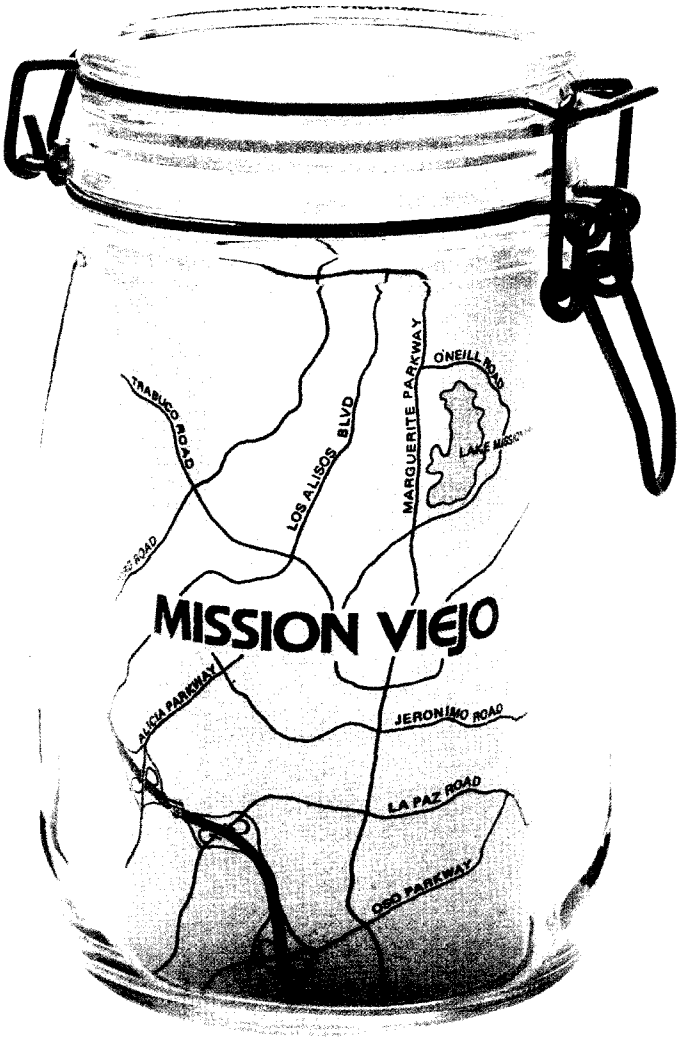

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wax explains, "and because she was relatively inexperienced, I decided to take it up with her boss, who was trying a case on another floor of the courthouse. I got up off the bench, took both lawyers, and went and found this guy. He was standing out in the hallway. The jury in his case was out—was hanging, in fact—and we all talked it over for about half an hour. It surely helped that the boss's jury was hung. I was able to point to his own situation and say, 'Look, here's a case you thought was strong. You were sure you could win. And the jury is hanging because one juror refuses to deliberate with the others. Now in this other matter where I think two to four years would be enough, nobody was hurt except the burglar, and the complainant is a tax fugitive in Europe. The case will have to be proved circumstantially. If this guy goes to trial, you can't tell what will happen. We're not seers. But with the two to four sentence on the reduced charge, you're getting a certain disposition with a significant punishment.' I urged him to accept that, and he did."

The judge continues more generally on the uses of plea-bargaining. "A lot of people criticize it as being weighted for the defendant," he says, "but in my view, plea-bargaining is neutral, depending on the way people deal with it. If both sides are conscientious, well informed, well prepared, if the plea-bargain reflects the seriousness of the charge and the background of the defendant, it can be very good. If on the other hand it has too great a dependence on extraneous factors—the personalities of the attorneys, the unavailability of trial parts or of witnesses—it can be bad. But it lends certainty, promptness, and finality to a process that otherwise often doesn't have it. As I keep telling attorneys: Certainty is preferable to severity as long as the sentence we're imposing is a reasonable one."

LIKE THE OTHER JUDGES in New York's criminal court, Harold Rothwax takes his turn at weekend duty in the crowded arraignment part, the lowest court in the system. This is where, seven days a week, cases of all sorts are first brought; where defendants are charged; where cases are dismissed, held over for the grand jury, or assigned to another part; where bail is fixed; where the judge often seeks immediate solutions to minor matters and imposes short jail sentences or modest fines. This is the court where the feel and smell of pain, rage, sorrow, poverty, and the rank city are the strongest. It is the pit of urban justice; the room is tense with the lingering reverberations of acts that took place only yesterday.

Rothwax has a long familiarity with this place, both as a judge and as a defense attorney, and on a recent Sunday he managed the calendar with an almost surgical dexterity, flipping fast through the papers handed to him, summoning the lawyers to whispered bench conferences, instructing the "bridgeman"—who calls defendants before the bench—which case he wanted to hear next, asking a young defendant if he understood what his lawyer had just told him about the probable consequences of a plea being offered. Rothwax dealt with matters involving assault, car theft, prostitution, possession of a weapon, robbery, drugs (a relatively "heavy" case in which the defendants had been caught with heroin worth about $25,000 on the street), impersonation of a police officer. He kept it all moving easily.

In his chambers during a recess, he smoked a cigar and relaxed. He wished aloud that he'd ridden his bike the five miles down to court, as he usually does when it isn't raining hard or snowing. He wondered if his wife and two small children would come down to join him for dinner at a Chinese restaurant near the courthouse. Then he got back to the subject of court business and told the story of a man who had recently appeared before him on a homicide charge that was nearly 10 years old. When the murder had occurred, the defendant had been a sick man, an alcoholic who often blacked out. He had hit another man over the head in the course of a holdup and had killed him. Then he had fled to Arkansas, where he got a job, stopped drinking, got married and had a child, and lived entirely peacefully and undetected for many years.

Last Christmas, as the judge told it, the man, unable to live with his conscience any longer, walked into a local police station and confessed to the crime. Brought back to New York, he eventually appeared before Rothwax, who reviewed the record, studied the voluminous reports from social workers and psychiatrists, pondered the last blameless years of the defendant's life, and deliberated about the right way to dispose of the case. Eventually, all the parties agreed to a solution: The man pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the second degree, was given a deferred sentence, and was allowed to go back on probation to his family in Arkansas. This happy and humane result was obviously a source of satisfaction to the judge.

Such outcomes affirm his good feelings about his job. "I think judging is terrific in a way," he said. "You're always in the process of learning, you're always drinking it in, and you're never sated. I'm independent, nobody tells me what to do. My job is to know the law and to understand the law—to do the right thing."

But not many of the cases Harold Rothwax hears work out like the Arkansas case, and the recollection of the others upsets him. "At times, a judge can read a presentence report and cry," he said. "I mean literally cry. You read that this kid's parents beat him brutally when he was young and they broke his arm and he fell on his head and they left him and they were drunkards and addicts and he grew up with an aunt who ran a whorehouse and he was beaten and thrown out of the house and there was endless noise and he had to share a bedroom with fourteen others and there was one bed and it was cold in the winter and hot in the summer and there was no food and he never felt loved, wanted, desired, needed, esteemed. You read this kind of a thing, and you wonder at the capacity of human beings to survive.

"How does this guy go on? How does he get dressed in the morning? How does he function—even as a criminal? And the saddest thing about all this is that now you've got a twenty-five-year-old guy who's acting out on the world the way the world has acted out on him. While your heart can cry for him, you know there's no way you're going to change him, and you know that he poses a singular threat to the kinds of decency and peacefulness you want in the world. Maybe there'll be intervals, but by and large that's what it's going to be: He's going to act out his rage on others a good deal of the time when we're silly enough to let him go.

"Isn't that a terrible judgment?" Rothwax asked, as the bridgeman signaled it was time to get going with the calendar again. "How do you live with that? Obviously there's guilt for it. And it's not only the guilt of the parents and the guilt of the society. But in a way you have to desentimentalize that kind of a thing, you have to become a little unfeeling. It seems to me that the question for the judge in this situation is, Is there any way we can reconcile this individual with his society? And if that conclusion in an unsentimental way is no, then this guy has got to go to jail." Rothwax rose and brushed a cigar ash from the front of his black robe. Then as the bridgeman called for order, the judge hurried back into the crowded court. ◉

Loudon Wainwright is a writer currently working on a history of Life *magazine.*

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WEST GERMANY'S EMBATTLED DEMOCRACY

THE ANTITERRORIST MENACE FROM THE RIGHT

by John Dornberg

Munich

IT HAPPENED ONE AFTERNOON shortly before Shrove Tuesday, but it was not one of those crude pranks or practical jokes typical of the Rhineland's famed carnival season.

Acting on an anonymous tip, a squad of green-jacketed, helmeted policemen, some with pistols drawn, others with machine guns at the ready, stormed into a café in downtown Wuppertal and surrounded a table where a thirty-five-year-old woman was demurely consuming one of those legendary creamy German pastries and drinking a cup of coffee.

While one officer snatched her purse, expertly searching it for weapons and hidden compartments, the others marched her—hands held behind her head—to a riot truck outside for a more thorough frisking and identification.

The woman was held for almost an hour at gunpoint while the officers radioed frantically to headquarters, where her identity was checked through the central computer bank at the Federal Criminal Bureau, West Germany's FBI, in Wiesbaden.

Only then did the policemen establish that despite a strong facial and physical resemblance, the lady was not, as originally suspected, Angelika Speitel—one of more than a dozen "gun girls" being hunted all over Europe in connection with last fall's kidnap-murder of industrialist Hanns-Martin Schleyer and with the hijacking of a Lufthansa jet to Mogadishu—but was in fact the president of the Wuppertal Women's Carnival Association.

Harrowing, ludicrous, a clear case of mistaken identity?

Yes, but disturbingly symptomatic of the atmosphere in West Germany these days following some eight years of pseudopolitical terrorism.

Notwithstanding all the headlines it has generated around the world, terrorism in West Germany is not quite the menace it has been made out to be. To be sure, even one murder is one too many, but a look at the statistics leaves one wondering about the "wave of violence" that has allegedly gripped the country. Thus in the eight years since 1970, when the late Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, and other leftist radicals went underground to launch their Tupamaro-like Red Army Faction, terrorists have taken the lives of 28 people, injured 93, and have been responsible for the holding of 15 hostages— which does not include the Lufthansa passengers.

Nor is there much persuasive evidence to support the image of radical, bomb-throwing desperadoes lurking in every dark alley. Since 1970, a total of 215 people have been convicted in connection with terrorist acts and put in prison; approximately 94 more are currently under investigation; and 42 are being hunted by police in Germany and throughout Western Europe.

chas b slackman

In addition, the authorities estimate that perhaps as many as 1,000 left-wing extremists —though definitely not more— of one foggy ideology or another, are willing to assist the hard core with various supportive, logistical actions, such as obtaining false documents, renting or buying getaway cars, arranging "safe houses" and apartments, or robbing a bank to provide the funds for such efforts.

Nonetheless, there is a terrorist menace here in the fact that the sociopolitical scales have been tipped from reform-minded, benign civil libertarianism to law-and-order hysteria accompanied by frenzied demands to "do something" and by an alarming polarization of the society.

Despite the statistics, recent opinion surveys reveal that 19 percent of adult West Germans feel themselves personally endangered by such acts of terrorism as bombings, kidnappings, assassinations, and hijackings.

Bonn, once regarded almost as soporific as Liechtenstein's Vaduz and considered "quieter than Chicago's main cemetery," resembles a garrisoned capital under siege. Armored

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cars, machine gun-toting policemen, nervous secret service agents with telltale bulges under their jackets, and officers with vicious-looking dogs patrol Bonn's streets around the clock. The walls of public buildings are being armor-plated, and their roofs, bomb-proofed. Machine gun nests have been placed atop Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's offices. Rolls of barbed concertina wire and sandbag fortifications surround foreign embassies and the homes of prominent politicians. Behind them sit itchy-fingered guards.

More worrisome, however, than these highly visible anti-terrorist responses—most of them merely irritations of daily life to which one can eventually adjust—it seems that in their reaction to the terrorist challenge, the West Germans are striking at the very fabric of liberal and democratic society in the name of protecting it, a phenomenon for which one finds chilling precedents in history.

As Carl Amery, one of the country's more influential leftist intellectuals, put it not long ago, the terrorist threat has thrown West Germany's progress toward democracy back "by at least ten years." Could that be in fact what the Red Army Faction and its successors of "second generation" radicals, as Schleyer's murderers are called, intended?

To be sure, the Bonn republic is not the Weimar republic. Despite one million unemployed people, a sluggish economy, growing irascibility and militancy on the part of labor and management, as well as hints of vexed disillusionment with the three major political parties and the parliamentary order of things, there are no signs of the uncertainty, pessimism, frustration, anger, or polarization of the 1920s that produced Hitler.

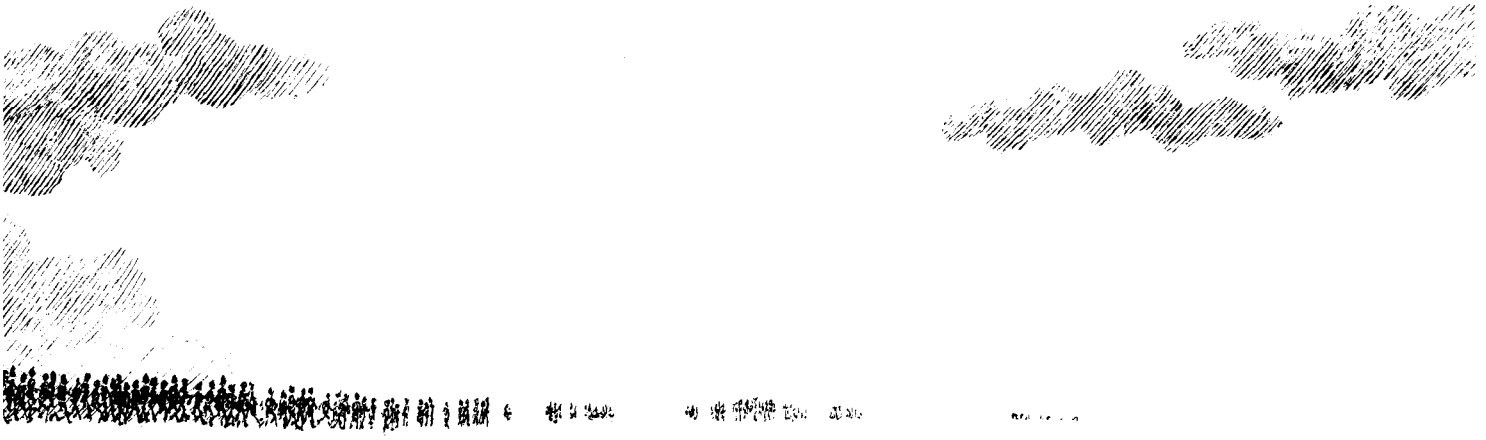
People are simply too well off for that, and they know it, despite audible grousing. There may be a ferment of discontent and manifestations of emotional hostility at the universities, but these are largely over the amount of subsidized education impecunious students should receive; the majority of students seem primarily concerned with earning the degrees that will get them the slice of the pie they desire.

Moreover, parliamentary democracy, in the words of Ralf Dahrendorf, Germany's former Common Market commissioner and now the director of the London School of Economics, "gained more than a temporary foothold." The "real German miracle," he says, "is that the society became liberal, not only on its political surface." The evidence was there in the October 1976 general election, when all 14 splinter and radical parties on the ballot, from the far Left to the far Right, won less than one percent of the vote between them, whereas the Social, Free, and Christian Democrats obtained the balance.

Nor is West Germany the authoritarian, dictatorial, police, or quasi-Fascist state that the radicals, terrorists, and their supporters in neighboring European countries would have us believe. To portray the country as such is either patently absurd, symptomatic of pathologically twisted minds, or evidence of total historical ignorance. West Germany is still, as Chancellor Schmidt phrased it not long ago, "the most liberal, democratic Germany there has ever been." But for how much longer?

To meet the terrorist threat and to protect the *Rechtsstaat*—a state based on the rule of law—many of the freedoms and liberal precepts on which it was founded have already been curbed and challenged. In keeping with the German notion that more law will automatically assure more order, a whole catalog of legislation has been enacted with the effect of protecting the state from its citizens rather than the citizens from the state.

Among the ad hoc and in some cases retroactive laws that the Bundestag—the popularly elected lower house of the parliament—has passed during the previous three years, a number go to the brink of, if not yet beyond, constitutionality. One measure outlaws terrorist associations and equates them with "criminal gangs." Advocacy of, membership in, or passive or active support of them is a felony.



Because a handful of radical lawyers were aiding and abetting terrorist activities, allegedly even smuggling into Stammheim prison the pistols with which Andreas Baader and Jan Carl Raspe are presumed to have killed themselves, contacts between attorneys and terrorist defendants have been severely curbed. The correspondence between them is subject to surveillance. Glass partitions must divide them when in conference. Defense lawyers can be disbarred or excluded from representing accused terrorists on the mere suspicion that they are collaborating with their clients in activities of a criminal gang nature.

By government decree, convicted and suspected terrorists can be barred from any and all contact with the outside world, including their lawyers, for renewable two-week periods in the event of such crises and emergencies as a kidnapping or a hijacking aimed at their release. Terrorist defendants can be tried in absentia.

The police have been empowered to search entire apartment buildings on a single warrant if they suspect evidence of or clues leading to terrorist activities there.

Another new law entitles the police to hold persons incommunicado and without recourse to counsel for up to 12 hours if they are unable to identify themselves properly when stopped at roadblocks, in raids, or during other "rou-

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"Incidents of overt anti-Semitism, ranging from cemetery desecrations to threats of physical violence toward Jewish citizens, have increased perceptibly."

tine" searches.

These measures are euphemistically called "tightening the legislative screw." But the problem with any screw, as Munich's influential, liberal *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* warned recently, "is that if turned too far, its thread will break."

Nonetheless, the Bundestag intends to do more turning. One bill in the hopper would authorize police to shoot to kill—instead of merely to wound or incapacitate—fleeing or attacking suspects. Another would tighten the regulation that all citizens register with and notify the police of address changes. This bill would also require hotel guests to present ID cards or passports upon checking in and would provide for standardized, nationwide computer data on all burghers.

SUMMING UP THE DILEMMA, Countess Marion Dönhoff, publisher of the respected liberal weekly *Die Zeit*, said recently:

"The government is caught between two camps: those in its own ranks who believe the new laws go too far and the opposition, which considers them inadequate.

"The opposition is calling for antiterrorist legislation as precise and meticulous as the terrorist organizations themselves. If the opposition had its way, our whole way of life would change, and the *Rechtsstaat*, which we are trying to defend, would cease to exist.

"But if we do little or nothing, our citizens will accuse us of being weak and indecisive and start to call for a strong man to avert the danger. We need only recall the readers' letters in this newspaper when the Schleyer crisis was at its height to see the imminence of this danger.

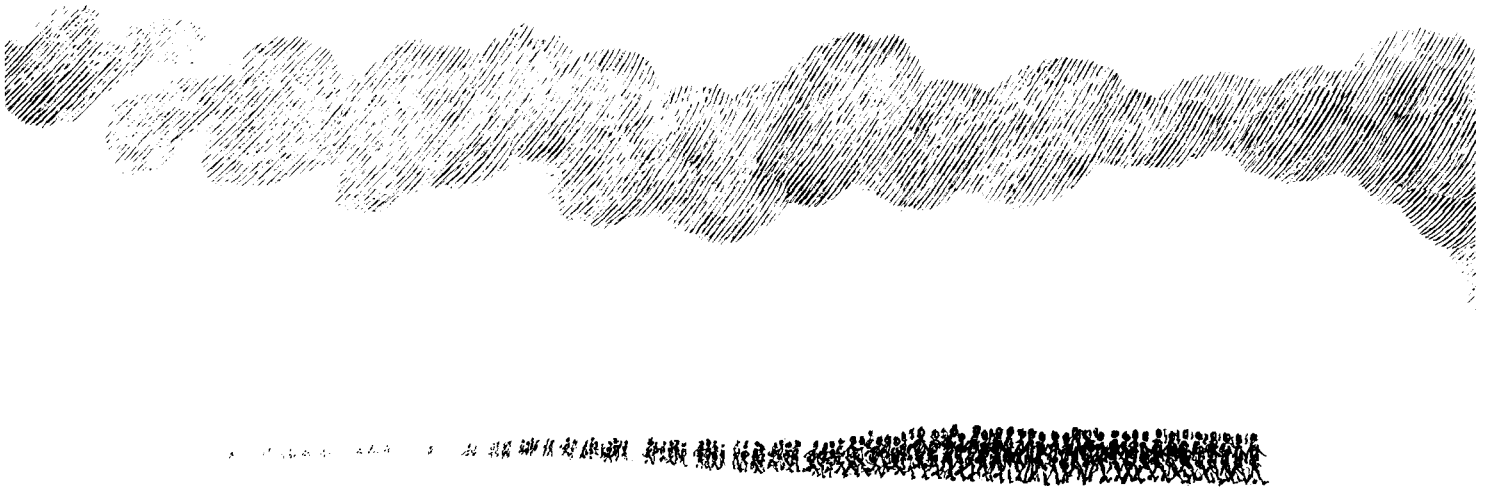
"One sometimes wonders," she continued, "whether the recent rise of right-wing extremist organizations can be traced to this kind of thinking."

Be that as it may, the fact is that some 26 percent of adult West Germans, according to one recent opinion poll, yearn for "a really strong leader" again and 36 percent prefer "a single, strong political party" running the country.

Incidents of overt anti-Semitism, ranging from swastika smearings and cemetery desecrations to harassment of and threats of physical violence toward Jewish citizens, have increased perceptibly in the past year or so. There have also been recordings of worrisome incidents of anti-Semitism and symptoms of far-Right apologia in the *Bundeswehr*. The country is being inundated with books, records, and films—only thinly disguised as historical documentaries—that glorify Hitler and the Third Reich.

Yet conversely, ignorance of what really transpired during the Nazi era and of how Hitler rose to power is rampant among the young, largely because the schools fail to teach about it, despite a marked improvement in the contents of history books and the various edicts from state ministries of education requiring teachers to deal with the period in depth.

And there are definite signs of an organized rightist revival. Granted the neo-Nazi National Democratic party (NPD), which came within a hair of seating a bloc of deputies in the Bundestag in the 1969 election, is virtually defunct. (In 1976, the party polled three tenths of one percent of the vote. It is close to bankruptcy, and its own claim of 10,000 members is probably an exaggeration.) But what has happened to the 1.2 million West Germans who voted for the NPD in 1969? Where are they currently expressing their political aspirations or pursuing their political goals?



Some, it now appears, are active in clandestine neo-Nazi groups and grouplets that show no ambition yet to be on any ballot. According to government sources, there are 143 such extreme Right and neo-Nazi organizations, with a total membership of about 18,300, the NPD among them. While this represents a sharp decline from the 1950s and the 1960s, when membership was estimated at 100,000, there are indications that membership is again on the rise and that the groups are seeking ties to neo-Nazi and neo-Fascist organizations abroad—particularly in Italy and the United States.

In addition, such groups have become more militant and stridently anti-Semitic in their pronouncements, more conspiratorial in their organization, and above all more violent. Incidents of street battles, beer hall brawls, assaults on journalists, use of weapons and explosives, and overt displays of Nazi symbols and uniforms are on the increase.

To portray West Germany as being on the brink of a Nazi renaissance, as some Western European observers have done recently, is patently absurd. But there is a danger of being blind to the menace from the far Right at a time when all eyes seem fixed on real and putative threats from the far Left.

The danger is exacerbated by the current Germanic version of McCarthyism, which finds expression in a witch-hunt for radical leftists and terrorist sympathizers, in anti-

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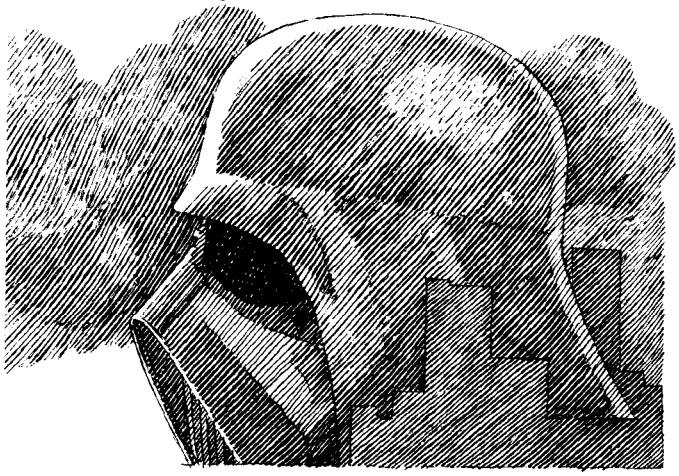
intellectualism, and in the spread of fear and resignation among intellectuals, who are being pilloried as the "spiritual instigators" of terrorism and left-wing extremism.

There is a "radicals' decree" that authorizes federal, state, and local authorities to test all civil servants and civil service applicants for their "loyalty to the basic democratic order." Since the governmental service is a huge monopolistic category embracing not only the conventional run of bureaucrats but all schoolteachers and university faculty members, judges and public prosecutors, railway and postal employees, public utilities workers, police and military officers, some scientists, and even staff physicians in government hospitals, this test has led to a mass vetting of some half-million people, with astonishing results.

Thus several hundred locomotive engineers, teachers, professors, career judges, prosecutors, and in one case even a doorman, have been dismissed or barred from employment in their chosen fields because of membership in left-wing parties or in organizations judged to be disloyal.

The atmosphere in the literary and artistic community is both repressive and depressive. In the wake of the steadily broadening concept of "terrorist sympathy and advocacy," there has been a pronounced current of inhibition toward



chas b slackman

any kind of controversy.

In Bavaria, a high school literature textbook has been banned from the list of permissible classroom materials because it contains several short poems by three left-wing poets. In a chilling echo of times past, one member of the Bundestag recommended that all works by those poets should be burned.

Some months ago one of the two national public TV networks even canceled a scheduled showing of the screen version of Arnold Schoenberg's opera *Moses und Aron* because the filmmaker, Jean-Marie Straub, had originally dedicated it to Holger Meins, the Baader-Meinhof group member who died as a result of a hunger strike in prison in November 1974.

"We have simply had it," the Nobel novelist Heinrich Böll protested angrily not long ago. "Until now they've been trying to intimidate us with blanks, but it won't be long before they start using real ammunition. We must start fighting right now to preserve what little remains of the *Rechtsstaat*."

Böll, along with Günter Grass, pastors Martin Niemöller and Helmut Gollwitzer, Willy Brandt, and a dozen other leading thinkers, has been singled out by Christian Democratic politicians and publicists as one of the "spiritual instigators" of terrorism.

Both the label and the allegation are predicated on the pervasive conviction among West German conservatives and reactionaries that terrorism and left-wing radicalism have their origins not only in the frustrated youth rebellion of the 1960s but in the knee-jerk liberal notions of sweeping societal reform, antiparentalism, antipatriotism, antiauthoritarianism, antiestablishmentarianism, and liberalism propagated by the intellectuals of the Left.

The argument is popular but specious, for the causes of the terrorist phenomenon are far more complex, and thus far no one in Germany, much less outside, has been very successful at pinning them down.

Suffice it to say that although the one is an outgrowth of the other, a clear distinction must be made between on the one hand, the original Red Army Faction—with its allied June 2nd Movement and its followers and sympathizers—and on the other hand, the so-called second generation of terrorists—the murderers of prosecutor-general Siegfried Buback, banker Jürgen Ponto, and Schleyer.

Ulrike Meinhof and her friends were rebellious—no question about that. And theirs was in fact a generational rebellion, albeit of a nature that must be seen strictly in the German context. They were rebelling against the residues of Nazism that they suspected lurking and embedded in West German society, failing to see that most of the remaining Nazis were geriatrics; against the "obscene rewards of consumerism for obscene practices of genocide"; against a society that seemed to have replaced the swastika with the mighty deutsche mark.

The second-generation terrorists are a different breed—young men and women, mostly women, sworn to revolution for the sake of revolution. Brutalized by society's reaction to and treatment of their Red Army and June 2nd idols, they have become ruthless kidnapper-killers, in addition to being wholly intolerant, autocratic, and intellectually arrogant in their ways. Products of an educational system that passed over Germany's Nazi past as if it had not existed, they do not know any better than to equate the present with that past. But one can only shudder at the specter of the German future they envision.

They do not identify with the state, so perhaps Ralf Dahrendorf is correct when he ascribes the causes of terrorism to a West German identity crisis. "As a country, dare I say 'nation,' " he wrote recently, "it has so far found neither purpose nor identity."

What they all—the first- and the second-generation terrorists—have in common is that they are *aus einem guten Haus*, which is more than merely saying "from a good family." The children of pastors, professors, lawyers, judges, doctors, architects, bankers, industrialists, and merchants, they belong to that comfortably situated, well-educated, properly reared upper middle class that while not necessarily the country's establishment is certainly representative of its elite.

Are they just the spoiled children of the *Wirtschaftswunder*—the economic miracle—grown to defiant adulthood?

Did they just have it too good, and are they just bored with the stultifying atmosphere of the consumer society in which they were raised?

Are they waging urban guerrilla warfare against their own parents, and if so, why? Because, as Horst Mahler put it, the parents did not resist?

There are no easy answers. But whatever the terrorists' aims and goals, their impact on West Germany thus far has been tragic: in the lives lost; in those injured and maimed; and above all in stopping, if not turning back, the clock of democracy. ◉

John Dornberg is a free-lance journalist living in Munich.

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KURT HERBERT ADLER: SAN FRANCISCO'S IRON MAN OF OPERA

by Barry Hyams

AS GENERAL DIRECTOR of an opera company, Kurt Herbert Adler has been at his job longer than anyone else alive—including Rudolf Bing, formerly of the Met—and he is only two years behind the American record held by the storied Giulio Gatti-Casazza. In April, Adler, at seventy-three, marked his fiftieth anniversary of full employment in opera, which began with an assistant directorship of the Civic Opera in Kaiserslautern, Germany; and this autumn he will celebrate his twenty-fifth season as head of the San Francisco Opera (SFO). Upon his arrival there, opera began to move closer to theater art.

"Opera when I came here," he observed recently in cadenced Viennese accents, "was mainly for presenting singers—predominantly stars and the star system. Some operas *were* staged, but they were the exception. Since then, opera is more musical theater. Demands are higher on the chorus, the orchestra, the designer, and the stage director. We don't rehearse enough, but [we do so] much more than when I first came."

His tenure on the West Coast brought from anonymity to recognition as the Avis of opera (number two but trying hard) the company whose panjandrum is acknowledged to be number one by a consensus of professionals and by the governments and the universities that have pinned him with decorations and honored him with titles and degrees.

Adler's instinct for theater was nurtured when he was in his teens and working under Max Reinhardt. The fabled stage director adjured him: "Remember, young man, in the theater nothing is impossible." When Adler assumed his present post, in 1954, Bruno Walter told him, "You don't have a job; you have a mission." To his role of evangelist, Adler added that of ringmaster, and according to one Bay Area critic, he also added the attitude of an *Obergruppenführer*, comprising as he does in unequal parts the iron of Bismarck and the courtliness of old Vienna. Adler rules the six dependencies of the SFO with an imperial hand, and in the War Memorial Opera House, the lobby cowers under the proprietary scowl of a bronze bust of the director.

Adler is variously described. Some see him as short, generous of paunch, with soft, silver-gray, collar-length hair and kind, blue, bespectacled eyes. Others say he is rotund, hawk-nosed, irascible, and dictatorial. Still others see him as charming, tough, and indefatigable. All these descriptions are accurate, more or less, depending on Adler's mood—or on the humor of his observer. He commands all facets of the SFO from his fourth-floor office. No detail is too minor for consideration—from what occurs onstage to the notes in the program to the lights on the walls of "his house," which fronts Van Ness Avenue. Because, possibly, of his habitual 14-hour and frequently 7-day-a-week stints, his workaday face wears a grimace of dissatisfaction as he marshals nearly 800 employees and terrorizes his administrative staff, from whom he demands both fealty and self-sacrifice. Secretaries pass through his outer office like water over Niagara Falls. And although few aides have endured the term of the maestro's incumbency, Adler deems his authoritarianism a canard, "a myth one of the newspapers started."

"It is absolutely not true," he says. "You can ask my staff." Queried, they smile in silence. "Finding the right associates to whom one can delegate authority—as certain people accuse me of not being able to do—is largely a matter of luck, something like finding the right singing teacher." To date, his "singing teacher" has not appeared. When an employee claims, "I'm doing my best," Adler snaps, "The present best is not good enough!" If upon reflection the maestro eases up—"Perhaps I'm too impatient with others. Perhaps they are right and I am wrong"—he will quickly retract: "Our life is not so long that we can afford to be slow. In spite of my reputation, I have retained a large degree of humility and full recognition of my imperfections. But unless one is determined—to do what I want to achieve, I don't take off my blinds—I don't think one makes it."

What has relaxed with the passing years is Adler's appearance. He often shows up in a leather coat or a wildly checked sports jacket, a scarlet tie or a scarf, light-blue jeans, and Adidas sneakers. At rehearsals, he sails like a galleon down the aisle to drop anchor near row S. His humors run from abrasive to dulcet to unctuous; he fidgets, claps his hands to jog a tempo, phones backstage to chew out a chorus singing flat, and barks comments, which a sec-

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retary will type up in the morning as memos to the offending departments. The next moment he will purr to a star soprano, "You vill luff ze ten-arr I haff for you. He is zo-o-o hon-zum!"

In 1972, the San Francisco Opera celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with, among other things, a highlight performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, underwritten by local merchant prince Cyril Magnin for Beverly Sills. Early on in the project, Adler had occasion to bring his great charm and authority to bear on Sills.

"But, Kurt," she had objected over the phone, "if I arrive two days later, what's the big deal?"

In his best Bismarckian manner, Adler replied, "You wanted a new production; it's yours. You wanted a first-class tenor; I can't do better than Luciano Pavarotti. You wanted Capobianco [as director]; you have Capobianco. Now you have to live up to your terms."

Sills thought for a moment. "You're right," she agreed. "I'll be there when you expect me."

When not wrangling with divas, Adler will oversee news releases, ad copy, and drafts of correspondence. Revising them, he growls, "I know English better than all of them." He is not known to admit error readily, though he relishes telling of things gone wrong in his early days at the SFO, for example, when he faced his board of directors to take the blame and to apologize for some error he had made: "'I'm sorry,' I said, 'but I assure you I will make more mistakes, because if I didn't, I wouldn't be human—and on top of that, you couldn't afford my fee.'"

Son of a music-loving mechanical engineer, Adler was brought up in Vienna and given an education that equipped him at thirteen to sight-read the piano score of *Die Walküre*. This led to six years at the Academie. Concurrently, he attended the conservatory and worked toward a doctorate at the university. The degree never materialized, mainly because he spent his evenings conducting student orchestras and serving as musical assistant to producers Max Reinhardt and Otto Preminger. He also sang second tenor in the chorus for a performance of *A Masked Ball* at the Academie. From Kaiserslautern he answered a call in 1936 to be one of four assistants to Toscanini, who was preparing his first *Die Meistersinger* at Salzburg. The others in the quartet were Georg Solti, Erich Leinsdorf, and László Halász.

THE FOLLOWING YEAR, fate appeared in the form of a young soprano, Janet Fairbank, daughter of an influential corporation lawyer in Chicago. Adler coached her professionally, and in 1938 she whisked him off, barely a jump ahead of the Anschluss, to the Windy City, with a visa for him obtained by her father from Secretary of State Cordell Hull. In America, Adler made his mark by revitalizing Chicago's moribund Grand Opera Company. He could shred a blundering singer's pride and by rehearsal's end restore the performer's tattered self-esteem. As a tamer of temperament and an administrator with moxie, he brought the Falstaffian and intractable John Charles Thomas to heel and psyched Grace Moore into singing in Grant Park's open-air opera. Among his early students was Carol Fox, who graduated to become founder and current director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. At the end of five years, Adler departed for San Francisco to serve under Gaetano Merola, upon whose death he advanced first to artistic and then to general director. In the 25 years since, Adler has transformed a modest regional company, whose 22 seasonal performances cost $750,000, into an organization of world repute with a budget of $6.3 million (next season's budget is estimated at $7 million). He presides over a year-round six-ring circus, at one time the only operation of its kind and today the prototype for smaller companies in several cities here and abroad.

The organization includes:

• The San Francisco Opera. Averages 66 performances in 12 weeks and is somewhat pompously referred to as "the international company," perhaps justifiably, having presented the U.S. premieres of 20 major works besides the standard repertory; introduced to American opera more than 175 prominent singers, conductors, directors, and designers; and lifted from obscurity such native talents as Mary Costa, Marilyn Horne, and Leontyne Price. ("I sort of grew up in San Francisco, vocally and professionally," says Price.)

• The San Francisco Opera Auditions. Established by Adler in 1954 for singers west of Illinois. Grants four cash prizes equal to $3,750 and a concert appearance in midsummer at Stern Grove, accompanied by a symphony orchestra under Adler's baton.

• The Merola Opera Program. Established by Adler in 1957 as a memorial to his predecessor. Selects from 15 to 20 audition finalists for a 10-week training session in vocal and stage techniques, which culminates in full-scale opera presentations, three cash awards totaling $2,250, and contract consideration for Adler's other performing units.

• The Spring Opera Theater. Founded by Adler in 1961. Is one stage in the development and experience afforded young artists to perform professionally in contemporary works and perennials with new looks, mostly in English.

• The Western Opera Theater. Founded by Adler in 1967. Introduces fledgling artists to conventional opera and opera in English to outlying places in California and all the way to Alaska. Presents annual engagements of Dollar Opera (now an inflated $3) and delivers Street Opera to low-income neighborhoods. Of 70 singers who have appeared with the Western Opera

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Theater, about half have gone on to appear with the Spring Opera Theater and the SFO.

• The Brown Bag Opera. Most recent (1974) ring in the Adler circus. Performs standard and new works tailored to 40 minutes for lunchtime audiences and has gradually expanded out of the Veterans Auditorium to parks, hospitals, and factory sites.

This hyperactivity, plus a joint program with Affiliate Artists, works to the advantage of young artists and helps generate box office demand for the SFO, which continues to play to capacity. Uniquely, attendance pays 62 percent of the company's operating and administrative costs. Fund drives, county, city, and federal grants, subscriber contributions, and underwriters of new productions keep the annual carry-over deficit under 1 percent. Adler runs a tight ship, which in his lexicon means parsimony. "We still count dimes," he says. "Maybe we don't count nickels anymore, and I cut out pennies from our budget figures only a year or two ago. My staff is made aware of my stinginess again and again, day after day. One used to do business by letter; then it was by Western Union. Both were slow and unreliable. Now it is by Telex. I tell my staff to study their languages, their English especially, so that one can say the same thing with half the words."

His proclivity for squeezing a dime has its creative side. As one of the founders 10 years ago of Opera America and as a member of the International Association of Opera Directors, he advocated the pooling of resources and the exchange of productions by major opera companies. Last fall witnessed that policy in full bloom, with half of his season's 10 presentations borrowed: *Adriana Lecouvreur, Aida,* and *I Puritani* from the Met; *Idomeneo* from Cologne; and *Turandot* from Strasbourg. Conversely, the SFO's *Coronation of Poppea* was seen in Paris, and its *Thaïs* and *La Favorita* appeared at the Met. *Peter Grimes*, produced jointly with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, was staged first by the SFO; and Adler's coming season will include *Billy Budd*, either borrowed from abroad or newly built at home.

On the private side, Adler is in his third marriage. He left his first marriage behind in Vienna. The issue from his second are Ronald, assistant stage director of the Munich Staatsoper, and Kristin, who is married to Charles (Chuck) Krueger, erstwhile star tackle for the San Francisco Forty-niners football team. It is not clear who reveres the other more, Adler or Krueger, who

The Adler Guest List (and How It Grew)

by Irving Kolodin

AS A PORT OF ENTRY for immigrants, New York has long lorded it over the rest of the United States, owning not only the symbol (the Statue of Liberty) but also the statistics to prove its point. But San Francisco has a more than creditable record where artistic migrants are concerned. Through this "back door" have come, in earlier years of the century, such famous musical folk as Luisa Tetrazzini, who was something more than the Joan Sutherland of her day; Jascha Heifetz, whose status among violinists requires no elaboration; Sergey Prokofiev, one of the great composers of the century; and, more recently, Isaac Stern.

In the 25 years since he became artistic head of the San Francisco Opera, Kurt Herbert Adler has turned a sedate trickle of guests into an annual freshet. Hardly a season has passed without his introducing in the War Memorial Opera House performers who have later become cherished names to all of America. The tradition is one handed on to Adler by his predecessor, Gaetano Merola, who just before he died "left" Renata Tebaldi and Mario del Monaco to Adler. Such a legacy has kept Adler on his toes, a position he appreciates rather more figuratively than physically.

One can hardly conclude, however, with only a casual reference to such a more recent name as Luciano Pavarotti (who made one token appearance with Joan Sutherland in Miami before launching his American career in San Francisco, in 1967). Is Adler so much smarter than such competitor colleagues as Carol Fox, of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, or the Bing-Gentele-Chapin-Levine artistic arbiters of the Metropolitan's affairs in their time? Perish the thought! They have had their triumphs, such as Maria Callas's American debut, in Chicago, or Herbert von Karajan's associations with the Metropolitan (neither of these artists performed opera in San Francisco). But Adler's track record is so persistently preeminent (as the adjacent chronology suggests) that something more than cleverness has to be at work.

First and foremost, in my opinion, is mobility. This applies not merely to Adler's dashes here and there to foreign capitals (and provinces as well) in his off-season but also to the flexibility of the operation he heads. He can make a move in January as to whom San Francisco will hear in October much more readily than his competitors can.

The short, concentrated character of the San Francisco season enables Adler to entice a new, emergent name or an established, elusive one with offers of more work per week and more dates per month than can be gotten at, for example, the Metropolitan. Maybe the bracing climate of San Francisco in fall has something to do with the artists he presents. But the bracing paychecks that accrue during an engagement are also a factor.

The San Francisco Opera must work hard and pay well to keep its casts on a high level because the stage of the War Memorial Opera House was antiquated the day it opened, in 1932. As a result, visual impact is not easy to come by. Certainly the production of Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten* seen late in the Metropolitan Opera season has variety and movement that San Francisco has never known in the same work. But Adler wisely gave this modern masterpiece its first American production in 1959, years before the Met got around to it.

What, after all, is more important: a turntable and a stage with lots of elevators moving up and down or a flat surface holding repeatedly some of the newest, greatest singers in the world?

One need hardly consult the Delphic oracle for a clue to Adler's answer. It is, of course, that he would like to have *both*. But if it comes down to either/or, my guess is that Adler prefers a tenor with a strong high C to all the stage machinery manufactured in Germany last year.

Why not? He too has to listen to the performances. ◉

Editorial consultant: Arthur Bloomfield, author of Fifty Years of Opera in San Francisco.

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now runs a bar/deli in the East Bay. Adler's current spouse, the former Nancy Miller, almost four decades his junior, at one time worked in the SFO's technical department and now acts as her husband's aide-de-camp.

Retirement? In the past, he nipped the subject curtly with "Maybe when I'm a hundred." Recently asked whether he could sit on a beach and do nothing after leading such an active life, Adler replied, "I would, certainly. Maybe the tide someday comes in, and maybe I can't stand it. Everything has to be tried." Nevertheless, he is currently projecting the SFO into 1982 and not grooming a successor.

"I wish I would know someone," Adler says. "We are working with extremely limited means, and not everybody would want to do it this way. I have no choice. I will have to make up my mind because whoever takes over the company should have one, better, two years with me. Certainly there will be tremors. I hope it would be an amicable turnover so that my work, a lifetime's work, was not in vain—that it doesn't shake the company unduly. I would hope what I've done has good foundations."

Detractors say he fancies a götterdämmerung after his demise. In truth, his focus is on San Francisco's Performing Arts Center. It has been in the proposal stage since 1970, and Adler would like to taste its conveniences before abdicating. The SFO has been feeling the same growing pains the Met suffered at its old West Thirty-ninth Street location. At the height of a season, the SFO rehearses all over town in seven different halls, in lofts, and in auditoriums. At the rear of the Opera House, scenery and props are parked in transfer containers. When completed, the Performing Arts Center will provide rehearsal stages, workshops, and storage space. A separate concert hall for the symphony will free the War Memorial for longer opera seasons, thus drawing more income from the city's opera-hungry audiences. When it was planned, the center's estimated cost was $20 million. Eight years have spiraled the figure upward by more than 65 percent. Partial completion is forecast for the end of 1979; completion of the symphony hall and rehearsal areas is projected for two years later. The Performing Arts Center and its expanded facilities pose a question mark over Adler's future.

"Should I participate in its modifications," he ruminates, "or leave it to the new man? There are strong requests to facilitate the transition, and old colleagues say, 'You're a damned fool! Quit while you're ahead!' But one has the right to try what one has in mind."

His toughness when challenged causes him to bristle. But he admits to getting angry only "when someone doesn't say the truth.... [Truth] is easy to take if you are used to it."

Which applies to himself as well. But his flintiness—and his shrewdness—prevails. In recent years, Placido Domingo has been occasionally silencing his big voice to indulge his penchant for conducting, as he did in Munich, Hamburg, and New York (at the City Opera). Adler too has been reactivating his own talent at conducting, not only for the annual summer festivals in Stern Grove but for at least one production each opera season.

However, at the 1976 Fol de Rol—the opera company's sumptuous benefit concert—he stepped aside and turned the podium over to Domingo to lead the orchestra as Elena Obraztsova sang Dalila's *"Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix."* This was prompted more by Adler's showmanship than by noblesse oblige.

The aria includes a one-line response from Samson: *"Dalila! Dalila! je t'aime!"* When Domingo delivered it full voiced to Obraztsova while continuing to conduct the orchestra, the applause brought down the house. Whether he is dealing in surprises or excellence, audiences expect top quality from Adler. He rarely disappoints. ◉

Barry Hyams has completed a biography of art collector Joseph H. Hirshhorn, soon to be published by E. P. Dutton.

First in San Francisco

Top performers introduced to a major American opera stage, 1943–77: B—basso; BB—bass baritone; BA— baritone; C—conductor; M—mezzo; S—soprano; T—tenor.

YEAR

1943
Adler, Kurt Herbert (C)

1953
Borkh, Inge (S)
Faull, Ellen (M)
Klose, Margaret (M)
Sills, Beverly (S)
Simionato, Giulietta (M)
Solti, Georg (C)
Valletti, Cesare (T)

1954
Carteri, Rosanna (S)
Robin, Mado (S)

1955
Lewis, Richard (T)
Schwarzkopf, Elisabeth (S)

1956
Christoff, Boris (B)
Colzani, Anselmo (BB)
Gencer, Leyla (S)
Nilsson, Birgit (S)
Rysanek, Leonie (S)

1957
Merriman, Nan (M)
Price, Leontyne (S)
Streich, Rita (S)
Taddei, Giuseppe (B)

1958
Panerai, Rolando (B)

1959
Costa, Mary (S)
Evans, Sir Geraint (B)
Jurinac, Sena (S)
Tucci, Gabriella (S)

1960
Bjoner, Ingrid (S)
Horne, Marilyn (M)
Konya, Sandor (T)
Toepper, Hertha (M)
(Spring season)
King, James (T)
Shirley, George (T)

1961
Engen, Kieth (BB)
Sciutti, Graziella (S)
Sutherland, Joan (S)
(Previously in Vancouver, British Columbia)

1962
Lipp, Wilma (S)
Stewart, Thomas (BB)

1963
Prètre, Georges (C)
Shuard, Amy (S)

1964
Collier, Marie (S)
Lorengar, Pilar (S)
Waechter, Eberhard (B)

1965
Stein, Horst (C)

1966
Kraus, Alfredo (T)

1967
Burrows, Stuart (T)
Marsh, Jane (S)
Pavarotti, Luciano (T)
(One prior performance, in Miami, Florida)
Ulfung, Ragnar (T)
Wixell, Ingvar (B)

1969
Bonisolli, Franco (T)
Jones, Gwyneth (S)
Mackerras, Charles (C)
Molnar-Talajic, Lilijana (S)
Price, Margaret (S)

1970
Davies, Ryland (T)
Fassbaender, Brigitte (M)
Levine, James (C)

1971
Kubiak, Teresa (S)

1972
Napier, Marita (S)
Rintzler, Marius (B)

1973
Remedios, Alberto (T)

1974
Randova, Eva (M)
Tomowa-Sintow, Anna (S)
Weller, Dieter (BA)

1975
Rostropovich, Mstislav (C)
Tappy, Eric (T)

1976
Hesse, Ruth (M)

1977
Payne, Patricia (M)
Schwarz, Hanna (M)

—I.K.

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THEATER

Stripped-Down Shakespeare

by Martin Gottfried

A THEATER that produces only new plays is like a library that stocks only new books. If we mean anything at all when we speak of culture, we must believe that men create works of lasting value. Without performances of the great plays of the past, a theater is leading only a day-to-day existence.

Yet that is more or less what New York has been doing ever since the demise, last spring, of the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center. While most large American cities have by now established institutional theaters, New York sees few productions of classics.

In an effort to fill this vacuum, two new institutions have recently begun operations—the BAM Theatre Company, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the New York Actors' Theater, at Columbia University.

Now in its second season, BAM has every reason to succeed. Its artistic director is Frank Dunlop, an Englishman with excellent credentials and, more to the point, proven talent. His repertory theater background has led him to choose actors with classical training. They are among America's first generation of so-called character actors, that is, *real* actors who do more than exploit their own personalities. BAM has already formed the nucleus of an excellent company with Rene Auberjonois, Austin Pendleton, Barnard Hughes, and George Rose. It has engaged Blythe Danner, Tovah Feldshuh, Kurt Kasznar, Rosemary Harris, and Margaret Hamilton. Its only lapse has been a worrisome inclination toward movie actors with name value greater than their qualifications (Ellen Burstyn last season, Richard Dreyfuss currently).

With two productions last year and three already done this season, the BAM theater should be judgable, and yet it isn't. The programming has been sensibly balanced between dramatic workhorses (*The Three Sisters, Julius Caesar*) and unfamiliar, classy old comedies (Langdon Mitchell's *The New York Idea*, Ferenc Molnar's *The Play's the Thing*). One could quarrel with the choice of *The Devil's Disciple*, which, for no good reason that I can think of, is one of Shaw's most popular plays.

However, no pattern or identity has yet emerged at BAM. *The New York Idea* was done with great charm, but the Shaw was a drudge, and the Chekhov, near to incompetent. The Molnar couldn't have been more delightful, filling the academy's huge stage with Art Deco flamboyance; the production floated like the bouquet over cognac. On the other hand, the most recent production, *Julius Caesar*, proved ridiculous when bearable. Dunlop (who has directed every production so far) put his company's first Shakespeare play not in the academy's big proscenium theater but in its Lepercq Space. A "space" seems to be any room that insists on being artistic. This one is enormous, with a 50-foot ceiling and the acoustics of an indoor swimming pool. Dunlop set his audience on bleacher seats running along both lengths of the rectangular playing area. These bleachers were not raked enough for members of the audience to see over one another's heads. The production was stripped of scenery.

The actors wore togas, which was all right, but they also wore black patent leather riding boots, which *was* kind of strange. They opened the production singing "Hey There, Good Times," from the current Broadway musical *I Love My Wife*, which was even stranger; but strangest of all was the casting: For the loyal and heroic Mark Antony, Dunlop chose Austin Pendleton, a gifted but boyish and slight actor whose nervous mannerisms have grown epidemic. This is not the Antony who in the near future would sail down the Nile on Cleopatra's barge; he is the one to have a nervous breakdown while paddling it. George Rose was Caesar. A superb actor, Rose has spent a career playing working-class Englishmen. Now he is having a go at the aristocrats. He is superb at playing working-class Englishmen.

Even these choices were plausible compared to the casting of Richard Dreyfuss, of the short and roly-poly look, as Cassius. Dreyfuss is an excellent film actor, and the personal magnetism that makes him so effective in movies is evident when he is onstage. He also seems a sincere and hard worker, but that hardly qualifies him for a major production of Shakespeare. As Cassius, he seems as ludicrous as his character in *The Goodbye Girl* did playing an effeminate *Richard III*.

Fraser Young
Literary Crypt No. 109

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. *Answer on page 52.*

B OTIC GBH ICCI BI GKWS BI SC PKESJ, HPJ BI GKWS BI SC WBH.

—GPHJBTEHC

THE New York Actors' Theater does not have a "space." Room 309 in Columbia University's Havemeyer Hall is a regular lecture room in the School of Chemistry. The audience sits at desks. There is no stage, only a large rostrum. There are no wings, no technical facilities. Scenery is out of the question, and lighting, rudimentary. The room cannot even be darkened to blackout. Unlike BAM, the New York Actors' Theater was not working this way for the sake of a production conceit. The new company was dead broke, existing mainly on the convictions of its founder and leading actor—Laurance Luckinbill—and on the trust of its sponsor, Columbia's School of the Arts, Theatre Division. A second excuse for the stripped production: The company's inaugural play was Bertolt Brecht's *Life of Galileo*. Performance in a chemistry lecture hall might have seemed appropriate.

It proved not excuse enough. This play in particular needs the theater's machinery. It also needs cleaning up. Brecht never stopped rewriting *Galileo*. At last revision, he made it about the atom bomb, though the play still seems essentially about himself and his outwitting of the House Un-American Activities Committee. In any case, it is Brecht's most uncharacteristic play and a rather talky, uncharged one. Nor could this company's production rescue the play from itself.

Yet the show did have an air of commitment about it; it had the feel of integrity, of a group's hanging on to the idea of *theater*. The New York Actors' Theater seems energized by a belief in the stage and a desire to do only the worthwhile for the sake of only the worthwhile. Here is the theater's lifeforce. It is the only reason the theater has lived so long. It is also what culture is all about. ●

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*Publishers Weekly

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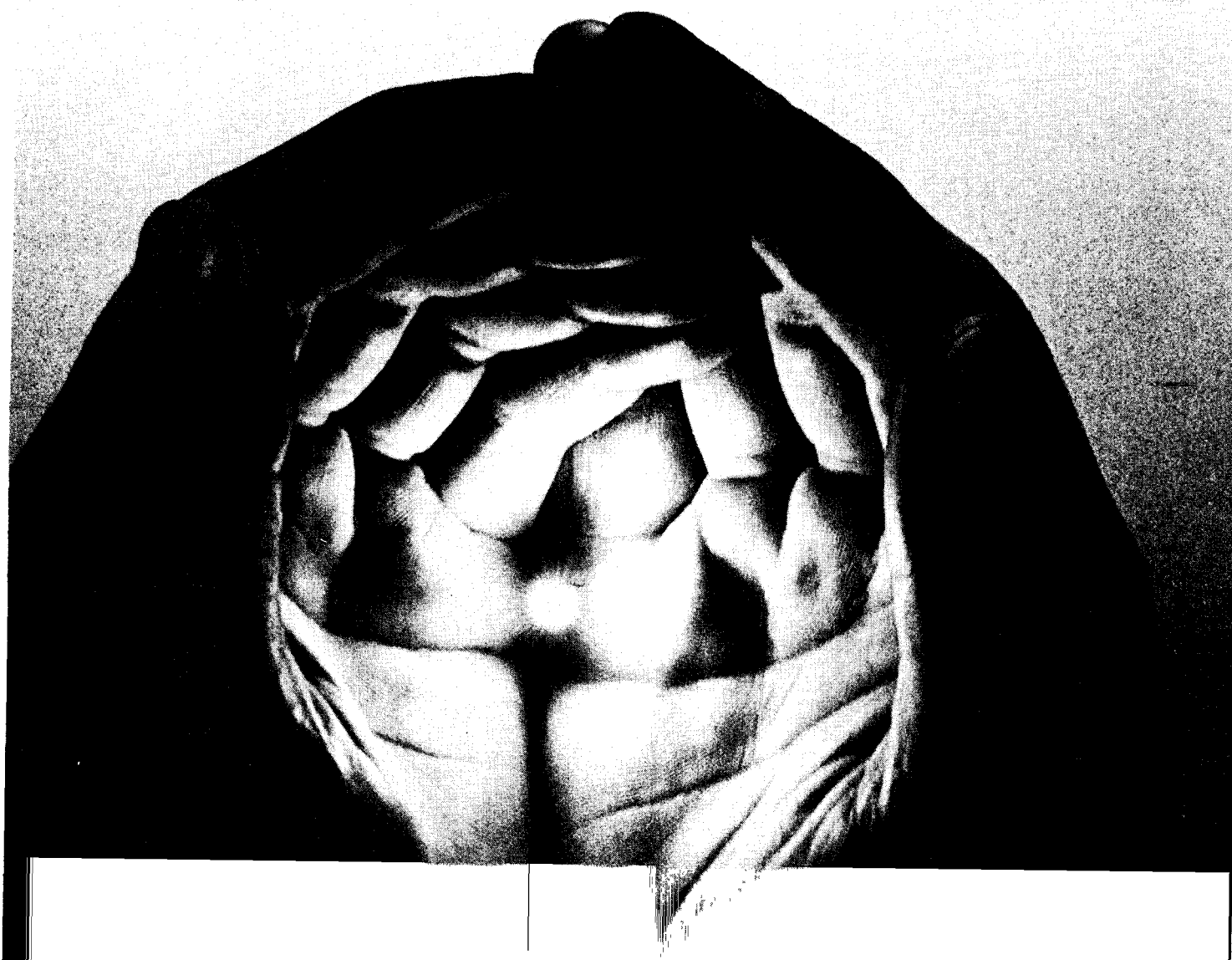

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TELEVISION

Saturday Night Dead

by Karl E. Meyer

UNTIL A YEAR OR SO AGO, Saturday night was the one evening of the week during which prime-time comedy was something more than a puberty rite. People who otherwise professed to hate television could be found covertly eavesdropping on a CBS lineup that included Archie Bunker, the Jeffersons, Mary Tyler Moore, Bob Newhart, and Carol Burnett. Rounding out the evening at 11:30 P.M. on NBC was *Saturday Night Live*, in which a madcap troupe pranced on the thin ice of taste with a refreshing disregard for network taboos.

But the lineup is now fodder for the nostalgia industry, and the old Saturday night already seems as remote as Jack Benny. During his year as chief programmer at ABC, Fred Silverman has pretty well destroyed the one evening of post-pubescent comedy. His weapon has been *The Love Boat*, a cruise ship afloat on pink lemonade and chartered in candy land. Ironically, the skipper is played by Gavin MacLeod, who once appeared as Murray on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.

As always, Silverman knew what he was about, and he fitted *The Love Boat* with deadly Nielsen torpedoes. Every night of the week we are thus assured an ample quota of jiggly mammaries, double entendre gags, and plots laced with dextrose. The rout has been near complete: Mary Tyler Moore ended her series last year; *All in the Family* was shifted to Sunday; and Carol Burnett, once acclaimed as the queen of Saturday night, was also shoved to the following day. This March, after 11 years and 240 programs, Burnett called it quits; and her marvelous skits, with their feral edge, will now survive as daytime reruns. Mama and Eunice proved to be no match for *The Love Boat*.

The interesting thing about *The Love Boat* is that new characters appear on each voyage, but the story is always the same—there are three interwoven playlets, each meant to reassure us that Cupid is a sly but sweet fellow, blessing both young and old. (The same production team was responsible for the earlier ABC series *Love American Style*.) As a result, one needs only to see one program and thereafter can merely read the plot summaries published weekly in *TV Guide*, these being recent samples:

1. Barbs fly when a divorced couple run into each other. 2. First love blooms between precocious moppets. 3. Julie's attempt to romance a hip, young senior citizens' guide is scuttled by his lively geriatric crew.

1. The cruise-director trainee turns out to be a schemer who's after Julie's job. 2. A pair of bickering marrieds pose as swinging singles. 3. A childless couple take in a young runaway.

With these capsule plots, one can color in the blanks, as in a paint-by-number set. There will be a confusion of identities, lots of double takes, innocent misunderstandings, and much dithering by skipper MacLeod. But everything will be sorted out in time for the closing commercial. Cameo appearances replace characterization, and the level of the scriptwriting is as predictably rudimentary as ABC.

To an extent, the remarkable ratings of *The Love Boat* are a token of a changing national mood, but this is only part of the story. Before he joined ABC, Silverman was chief programmer at CBS, a network that aspired to a certain classiness and that showed a willingness to take a chance with offbeat situation comedies. That inclination at CBS has all but vanished as ABC, with Silverman picking the programs, has retained its hold as the front-running network.

Now that Freddy is about to assume his new job as president of NBC, nervousness at that network has infected *Saturday Night*. I've noticed that the young cast takes aim at easy targets, like President Carter, and studiously avoids the most obvious subject for satire—the ratings war, which turns grown men into jelly. A few years ago, *Saturday Night* showed a wonderful skit satirizing *Star Trek*, in which Captain Kirk and the satyr-eared Spock saw a very exotic craft approaching the spaceship *Enterprise*. The object turned out to be a Cadillac, out of which a network program executive emerged and brought grim tidings: "Get this damn thing back to earth. Your ratings are lousy." (Or words to that effect.)

The man in that Cadillac is Freddy Silverman, and he's soon to be at the wheel of NBC. I doubt that *Saturday Night* will be around for much longer, unless it shapes up and turns its antic attention to such acceptable themes as Cupid's caprices and the joys of making it on a surfboard.

Years ago, in a sour mood, George S. Kaufman is said to have defined satire as what opens on Tuesday and closes on Saturday. For a while, television defied this Broadway adage, and it was fun as long as it lasted. But alas and damn, Kaufman appears to have been right. ●

"Quick, in here!"

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DANCE

A Dazzling Asian Archive

by Walter Terry

AMERICA'S curiosity about Asian dance arts was first piqued at the turn of the century by a farm girl from New Jersey. Ruth St. Denis was a minor dancer-actress admired for her high kicks, splits, and roll overs. She decided one day that there must be a better way of dancing. St. Denis knew that Oriental cultures treated dance seriously; they even had dancing gods. Fortified by what she had read in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and by what she had seen on the midway at Coney Island, she created a ballet called *Radha*, in 1906. It contained no authentic East Indian mudras (hand gestures), its music was filched from Delibes's opera *Lakmé*, and its theme was the happy hodgepodge of a Hindu goddess dancing a Buddhist concept in a Jain temple. Although *Radha* and St. Denis's other East Indian dances were viewed as only a vogue when the "Jersey Hindoo" shocked Boston with her bare feet and uncovered midriff, they were to change the course of American dance and even to contribute to the renaissance of India's own great dance art.

Today, the "vogue" St. Denis introduced some 70 years ago is finally receiving scholarly validation as an art form: The Library and Museum of the Performing Arts, at Lincoln Center, has just opened to the public its new Asian Dance Archive, the only multimedia collection of its kind in the world. The archive's abundant treasure trove includes 3,418 books and periodical articles; 5,500 slides and photographs; 160 films and videotapes (400 performance hours); 125 volumes of manuscripts (including microfilms of the ancient Bugaku manuscripts stored in the library of the Imperial Household of Japan); and the vast collection of Indonesian dance materials assembled by the late Claire Holt and transferred from Cornell University. These acquisitions were made possible by two grants from the JDR 3rd Fund ($28,000 in 1975 and $20,000 in 1976) and the assistance of the NHK-Japan Broadcasting Corporation (which obtained videotapes and films for the collection). The library itself, moreover, produced 19 hours of videotapes and films and 33 hours of taped interviews.

The thousands of items in the new archive are tangible assurance that some of the oldest dance accomplishments of man are being preserved. Many of the fragile pieces of ancient memorabilia had heretofore been scattered throughout the world, often in inaccessible locations. Worse, some Asian dance traditions were being changed or lost or even corrupted by contemporary fads in dance and music. Preservation of both the dances and the dance memorabilia was of great importance, for Asian dance is more than steps and gestures; it incorporates anthropological, historical, philosophical, religious, political, and ethnological information as well.

Searching out these treasures and then bringing them to one central, accessible place was a great boon to dance scholars, students, and fans. The step that is to be taken next is of even greater significance: All the items in the Asian Dance Archive will be disseminated to institutions throughout the world by means of the *Dictionary Catalog of the Dance Collection*.

The Asian dance collection has come a long way since Genevieve Oswald was appointed curator of the dance collection of the New York Public Library 25 years ago. She was given a little corner in the music division of the library's central building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street. There were a few books on dance, some folders of photographs—which Oswald sat on because she is so short—and behind her desk on the wall, her first acquisition: a poster from India showing the American expert on ethnic dance, La Meri.

Later, La Meri gave generously of her own vast Asian dance collection to the library. Her gifts were followed by the 600,000-item Denishawn Collection, given by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, a donation that included rare movies taken by Shawn during the Denishawn Dancers' historic tour of Asia, in 1925–26. Doris Humphrey, Ruth Page, and other Americans contributed their own Asian memorabilia to the dance collection.

Though the collection got its start from American gift givers, its validity as a truly Asian archive has not been compromised. As Oswald points out, these treasures were assembled as a direct result of Americans' study of Asian cultures, of their curiosity about and attraction to the exotic, and of their determined quests and chance discoveries. "Our new Asian Dance Archive is based on what Asians themselves have suggested to us, what they have recommended, what they have advised," Oswald insists.

The place of Americans in Oriental dance heritages has not been forgotten by Asians. Oswald, who received a supplemental grant from the JDR 3rd Fund for travel to Asia in order to survey its institutions and to develop a network of contacts with dance scholars and historians, found herself, quite by accident, beside the temple niche in Madras where Ted Shawn had conceived one of his most famous solos, *Cosmic Dances of Shiva*, 50 years before.

"It was an eerie experience," says Oswald. "We all know that St. Denis really introduced East Indian dance concepts to America, and we all know how much Ted Shawn contributed to Americans' awareness of Asian dance; but actually coming upon the niche that inspired *Shiva* was startling.

"Even more surprising was a question addressed to me in a remote Indian dance center: 'Do you know a lady named Denis? Maybe a Ruth Denis? I never saw her, but my parents and my teachers have spoken of her.' So you see, this Asian-American dance involvement seems really to have begun with Ruth St. Denis."

If St. Denis were living today—she died in her nineties a decade ago—she certainly would revel in an Asian dance archive of dazzling proportions right in New York City, housed in a handsome edifice not far from the old Hudson Theater, where Americans witnessed a self-taught farm girl capture the dance magic of ancient Asia. ◉

Wit Twister No. 120
Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word. *Answers on page 54.*

The ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ of
spring perfumes the river's lip
Where ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
comes to take a skinny-dip.
Hold still, bare-bosomed ___ ___
___ ___ ___ ___of the fens!
I'm focusing my telephoto lens.

A.S.

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KISSINGER AT STATE, NIXON AT BAY

The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years
by Tad Szulc
Viking, 822 pp., $20

Reviewed by William Bundy

BETWEEN JANUARY 1969 and August 1974, American foreign policy was guided by two men, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, whose combination of experience and professional study perhaps exceeded that of any comparable pair of top American leaders at any time in our history. They took over in a time of national turmoil and reconsideration, with the cold war consensus of 1950–68 in ruins and a new and more complex world picture emerging, and their tenure was marked by the winding down of the Vietnam War, rapprochement with China, détente with the Soviet Union, a more active American role in the Middle East, and in general an explicit concentration on balance of power considerations. There were striking successes, equally striking excesses in execution, and at the same time large reas of neglect and error, some of which have come home to roost only since Nixon retired in disgrace to San Clemente.

Until now, the foreign policy of those years has been presented in book form largely by close observers who relied heavily on Kissinger himself as their source. Henry Brandon's *The Retreat of American Power*, completed in the summer of 1972, is adulatory in tone, while Marvin and Bernard Kalb's *Kissinger*, completed in the spring of 1974, is somewhat more balanced and vastly more thorough but is still written as though seen through the eyes of Kissinger, then at the peak of his popular standing. The same applies to John Newhouse's *Cold Dawn*, dealing with the 1969–72 strategic arms negotiations that led to the SALT I agreements, and to Edward Sheehan's account of the 1973–74 Middle East negotiations, *Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger*. More than any other senior adviser or secretary of state in our history, Henry Kissinger had an eye not only to the care and feeding of the press on a day-to-day basis but also to the truth of Archibald MacLeish's reminder that in the end, historians control the reputations of statesmen.

So both in timing and in substance, a new and more searching account of the period would seem to offer immense promise. This reviewer has never met Tad Szulc nor, so far as I can recall, ever been in his line of inquiry. As a long-time overseas correspondent for *The New York Times* and as a winner of several awards for his reporting on foreign affairs, he would seem to be just the kind of close observer—of wide experience and proven resistance to official blandishments—who could best set up the case for a more critical view of the accomplishments and failures of Nixon and Kissinger, making full use of the post-1973 store of revelations in the process.

Alas, after the not inconsiderable chore of reading this 822-page book carefully, I came away profoundly disappointed. In terms of style, use of sources, sense of setting, and synthesis (or the lack of it), *The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years* falls way short of what might have been done. As was once said of the Missouri River, it is too thick to drink, too thin to plow—and muddy to boot.

To begin with, the writing is very hard going indeed. Szulc jumps from one major topic to another with little warning, and he follows no clearly visible organizational scheme except the frail one of chronology. He crams in a plethora of mechanical detail—who attended what policy meeting, what foreigners were received at the White House and when, the meaning of communiqués long since dissected to a fare-thee-well, just how Kissinger flew to Peking and Paris without the press finding out—to the point where again and again one loses the forest for the trees. Have we not had a surfeit of this kind of reporting already? And must Henry Kissinger always "race" from here to there?

The effect, particularly in the latter part of the book, is not only tedious but somewhat like a set of diary notes strung together. Szulc writes excellent news dispatches and is one of the most highly paid free-lance writers of magazine articles, usually focused on some significant scoop of his own. He has also written useful books on Latin America and on the politics of Czechoslovakia. But in dealing with the broad sweep of world events, he seems out of his element—Jan Steen attempting a mural on the scale of Tintoretto.

Next, not only scholars but ordinary readers with an interest in foreign affairs will be annoyed by the absence of any bibliography, footnotes, or source references, even for public releases or documentary material already in the public domain. It is one thing to protect confidential personal sources (though in this area, Hugh Thomas on Suez and John Newhouse on De Gaulle and the Anglo-Saxons have shown how separated footnote references to such sources can be both discreet and

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Sygma

Nixon and Kissinger (1974)—Their "combination of experience and professional study exceeded that of any comparable pair of top American leaders at any time in our history."

informative) but another to omit sources that would enable the reader to check the provenance and context of the public material cited. The omission is glaring in a book that is to a large extent built around the theme of inordinate secrecy in government.

Szulc's failure to cite his sources is not merely frustrating, it is also confusing. For he thereby obscures to what extent one is in fact getting new evidence of importance, as distinguished from a rehash. My own impression is that most of his revelations have already appeared in print, but I cannot be certain without doing more research than any reviewer (or most scholars) should be asked to do.

There is to be sure a wealth of inside information in the book. Szulc was a superb investigative reporter before that term was invented. He has obviously had good sources within the National Security Council staff and the CIA, in particular. But his overwhelming reliance on such "reporter's sources" at one extreme and on the public record at the other leaves out a whole layer of background knowledge and research in between. To one such as myself, once accustomed to reading government intelligence documents, it is as if a senior clandestine intelligence officer stationed in the United States were trying to write an overall national intelligence estimate, polishing the nuggets that he has collected and making them count for more than they are actually worth compared to other sources of information.

The problem of source emphasis relates directly to the book's major failure: synthesis and setting. Both the bias and the talents of the author are ill-equipped to pull together the material and set it firmly in the broad context of the times and problems with which foreign policy has to deal—and then arrive at persuasive historical judgments.

Take, for example, our rapprochement with China. In the section dealing with the year 1969, we get infinite detail on Ambassador Stoessel's opéra-bouffe pursuit of the Chinese ambassador in and out of receptions in Warsaw but not a word about the armed clash on the Ussuri River in March and only a few lines on the threats of armed, even nuclear, attack that emanated from Moscow throughout the summer of that year. It is too much to ask of a book completed in May 1977 that it should assess the recent melodramatic allegations by H. R. Haldeman about whether the Nixon administration did or did not head off a Sino-Soviet war at that time; for the time being, Kissinger's denials seem far more persuasive. But surely any serious student would regard the Ussuri clash as a landmark (with a clearly discernible relation to the Czech crisis of 1968 and to the Brezhnev doctrine justifying interference in other Communist nations) and would seek at least to provide the materials for judging how much of the initiative for rapprochement came from the Chinese side. Nixon and Kissinger probably deserve the high marks they have received from most observers (apparently including Szulc) for the style, sophistication, and (yes) secrecy with which they handled their dealings with China. But would not the substance of reconciliation have come about under any American administration at that time? Was not the time ripe in any event—as Michel Tatu of *Le Monde* perceptively predicted at least six months before the Kissinger

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"The tenure of Nixon and Kissinger was marked by striking successes, equally striking excesses in execution, and at the same time large areas of neglect and error."

flight to Peking?

Another example is Szulc's discussion of the 1973 Middle East war. While almost cursorily examining the war and the subsequent negotiations, Szulc is obsessed by the rejection by Israeli and American leaders of what he regards as categorical earlier intelligence of Egyptian plans. But were not such reports common currency, especially in that situation? Was there not a much graver failure of overall judgment, tied directly to the rapid rise in power of the oil-producing Arab countries over the three previous years? Szulc is right in charging that Nixon and Kissinger neglected economics and especially the change in the oil picture. But Szulc's own analysis lacks a depth of insight into the events of 1970–71, on which there is now abundant research available for a serious evaluation of the government's role in the first oil price rise. (Likewise, the vital economic events of late 1971 that ended the Bretton Woods system are dealt with very superficially.)

The same lack of context applies to the domestic American background. Szulc badly scants any real analysis of American public opinion on foreign policy or of the interplay between the President and Congress. Surely any serious student would wish to highlight and to analyze the impact of the landmark Nixon speech on Vietnam in November 1969—which combined a defense of the cause with the theme of gradual American withdrawal—and to examine the crosscurrents in American public opinion and the Congress that lay behind Nixon's ability, until Watergate, to hang on in Vietnam. Often acute in dissecting foreign politics, Szulc never comes to grips with American political forces—for example, that the name of the game in Vietnam was to not "lose" just before a presidential election, according to Daniel Ellsberg's thesis. Whatever its merit at earlier times, 1969–73 seems the perfect test period for that thesis.

The point goes to the heart of Szulc's central interpretations of Nixon's Vietnam policy and of the true meaning and limitations of the Nixon doctrine (which the book describes in detail but without including its eventual, more precise definition). Did Nixon, as Szulc contends, really hope for something approaching "victory" in Vietnam? Was he really misled either by field reports of progress or by the belief that the North Vietnamese would settle for anything less than an agreement that would leave their military forces in the south and the political deck stacked in their favor? Or was he attempting all along to conduct an orderly four-year retreat from an untenable position—a policy in some ways (including a strong element of duplicity) like De Gaulle's in Algiers? And if so, was the motive "just" domestic politics, to minimize the kind of backlash De Gaulle had had to master? Or was he moved, rightly or wrongly, by an overriding personal sense of the importance of preserving the image of American global power, as Jonathan Schell has argued of both Nixon's Vietnam policies and the domestic excesses that climaxed with the Ellsberg break-in and Watergate?

It is not that the book lacks statements of the author's conclusions concerning the Nixon-Kissinger policies and attitudes. Rather, it is that such conclusions—usually crisply stated and with sweeping denunciations and claims of sheer stupidity—not only come before the evidence is presented but are substantiated by only the most superficial analysis. If this is revisionism, it is revisionism without roots.

So in the end, the book tails off badly. Of course Nixon's claims of creating a structure of peace were grossly overdrawn. Of course his obsession with secrecy and deception was deeply corrupting as well as antidemocratic—of a piece with the crimes for which the House Judiciary Committee voted to recommend his impeachment. Yet it is striking that the one charge of deception most strictly in the field of foreign policy (the secret bombing of Cambodia) was in the end rejected by the committee and that Szulc never mentions this. One can accept much of Szulc's view of the damage done by these practices and attitudes without feeling that he has made any useful distinctions between what Nixon and Kissinger did and what was done by De Gaulle between 1958 and 1962 or by Franklin Roosevelt in 1940–41.

Moreover, there are many strong lines of criticism of the Nixon-Kissinger years that are hardly examined at all. Was their foreign policy really as systematic as its spokesmen (and Brandon) have claimed? Or was it not deeply affected by personal antagonisms—to Indira Gandhi, to the Japanese leaders generally, to Makarios in the barely mentioned Cyprus debacle of 1974? Was not the obsession with viewing Third World events through the prism of American-Soviet rivalry—later so fatal in Angola—the direct outgrowth of an attitude that had been strongly manifest in the earlier years? Was not the United States when Nixon departed the political scene far down a path of unilateral action and of neglect of major allies from which only the saner policies of Gerald Ford and a matured Kissinger helped to rescue it?

Even such obvious targets as the Nixon affinity for dictators are badly shortchanged by Szulc. He portrays Park in Korea as a dictator in 1969—a time when both the press and opposition leaders were operating with substantial freedom—and then says nothing of the actual proclamation of martial law there in the fall of 1972 or of the parallel action of Marcos in the Philippines (which may actually have been encouraged by Nixon). The embrace of the colonels in Greece appears only in the epilogue, and nothing is said of Spiro Agnew or of certain Republican fund raisers of Greek origin. Chile is covered in detail, to be sure, but the full breadth of Nixon's indifference to democracy needs much more development than it is given here.

I have tried to review this book as the brief for the prosecution it obviously set out to be. That it provides substantial material for such a brief is undeniable, even though no careful scholar will be able to use that material without getting into the question of ultimate sources. But the real defects remain diffusion, disorganization, and lack of depth. Much more was wrong with the policies of those years than the overselling of détente and linkage, the systematic use of deception, specific errors, or bad handling of intelligence. The flaws went much deeper: In the end, they went to the roots of the policies themselves, which were inadequately adapted to a new and drastically changed world situation. I am afraid this particular brief will give the lawyers for the defense a much easier time than they deserve. ◉

William Bundy is the editor of Foreign Affairs.

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The Letters of Tolstoy

Tolstoy's Letters: Volume I 1828–1879, Volume II 1880–1910
Selected, edited, and translated by R. F. Christian
Scribner's, 737 pp., $35

Reviewed by John Bayley

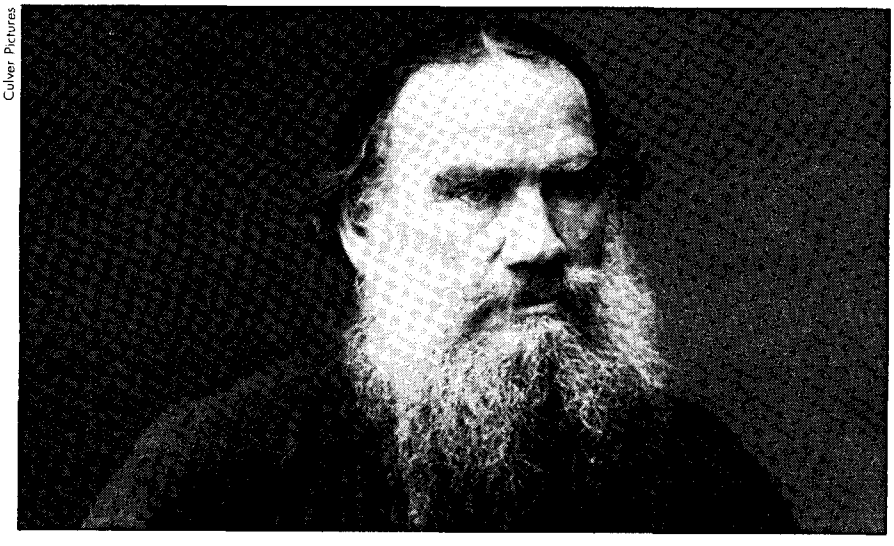
TO READ the early letters of Tolstoy is to plunge headlong into the consciousness of an extraordinary young man who seems strangely unlike both the Tolstoy of the biographies and the artist who moves with such apparent confidence through the calm, transparent medium of the stories and novels. The first thing that strikes one is the force of character imposing itself on the correspondent, as on the reader today, but with such an intensity of liveliness and warmth that one is drawn to the personality as effortlessly as friends and relations must have been.

It is often pointed out by Tolstoy critics that the haunted sage of Yasnaya Polyana, bedeviled by the competing claims of his disciples and family—bedeviled by himself most of all — was already present in the insatiably inquiring young man who even in his twenties was always looking for the truth and never finding it. There was no sudden conversion of course, just as there was no sudden moment when Tolstoy became a "great" writer. But nonetheless, the earlier letters not only are far more spontaneous and revealing than the later ones but they also show a Tolstoy sublimely happy in his youthful egotism and its powers of attraction. This is the Tolstoy not only of *Childhood* but also of his first remarkable attempt at writing, *The History of Yesterday*, in which the logic of his passion for the actual, the *true*, fashioned a kind of story out of a mere procession of events.

The young Tolstoy had a happy and surprising faculty for writing all sorts of nonsense to his correspondents. "I'm so longing to talk to you," he writes his brother Sergey, "that if the envelope cost not 10 kopecks but 30 rubles, I'd pay that much. I write and envy you the pleasure you'll get when you read my letter." What a remarkable quartet were the four Tolstoy brothers, as they confront us in a studio portrait, one of several excellent Tolstoyan photographs reproduced in this edition of *Tolstoy's Letters*. R. F. Christian's translation and presentation, with a short biographical note on each new correspondent who appears, are immaculate. Nikolay, the eldest, was always loved and respected by Lev the writer, the youngest of the four. Nikolay was in the army, and Lev accompanied him to the Caucasus, where he became an artillery cadet, wrote his first published tale, *The Raid*, and gathered the experiences that made *The Cossacks* and the fine story of his old age, *Hadji Murad*.

Tolstoy was always closer to Nikolay and to the second eldest brother, Sergey, than to the enigmatic Dimitry, who had a taste both for low life and for religious mysticism—and who died at an early age of tuberculosis, as did Nikolay. Tolstoy was nursing his eldest brother in the south of France when he died, and the writer never forgot the experience. He wrote a moving letter to his friend the poet Fet:

> A few minutes before he died, he dozed off, then suddenly came to and whispered with horror: "What does it all mean?" He had seen it—this absorption of the self in nothingness.



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And if he found nothing to cling to, what shall I find? Even less.... The truth that I've taken away from my 32 years is that the situation in which someone has placed us is the most terrible fraud and crime, for which words would have failed us (us liberals) had it been one man who had placed another man in that situation.... "Take life as it is." "It's not God who has placed you in this situation, but you yourselves." Nothing of the sort! I do accept life as it is, as a most mean, detestable and false condition.... As soon as man reaches a higher stage of development and ceases to be stupid, it becomes clear to him that everything is rubbish and a fraud, and that the truth which he nevertheless loves more than anything else is a terrible truth....

Well, of course, while there is the desire to eat, you eat, to [s...], you [s...]; while there is the unconscious, stupid desire to know and speak the truth, you try to know and speak it. That's the one thing left to me from the world of morality, higher than which I've been unable to rise; it's the one thing that I'll go on doing, only not in the form of your art. Art is a lie, and I can no longer love a beautiful lie.

Tolstoy was fond of Fet but despised his poetry and poetry in general—the beautiful lie. The desire to speak the truth, he felt, needed a very different kind of art, one that was not usually associated with art at all. His letter to Fet contains the pith of what Tolstoy was later to develop in that overemphatic and often disingenuous homily, "What Is Art?" while the death of Nikolay was drawn upon for the death of Levin's brother in *Anna Karenina*, as well as for the most harrowing of all Tolstoy's tales, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. The letter is significantly different from the tale, written more than 20 years later: For Nikolay, there was no question, as his brother watched him, of light appearing at the end of the black bag into which he was being pushed by death.

As the subtle Russian-Jewish critic Lev Shestov dryly observed, death was the only truth that Tolstoy sometimes endeavored not to see, or at least that he particularly abhorred seeing. In general, and especially when he was young, Tolstoy saw truth from the standpoint of an enormously fortunate and privileged Russian nobleman. It is this truth that forms the basis of the art of *War and Peace*, in which it is in some mysterious way made to coincide with the Russian order of things and Tolstoy's own position in it.

As a letter to the exiled Herzen, the most enlightened of the Russian liberals, makes clear, Tolstoy first thought of *War and Peace* as a book about the Decembrists, those aristocratic Russian reformers exiled after the war of 1812. Only after several abortive attempts to develop this theme did Tolstoy abandon it in favor of the simpler, more epic, less disturbing subject of the war itself.

Some of the most revealing as well as amusing of Tolstoy's letters are those written to Valeriya Arsenyeva, the attractive young neighbor with whom Tolstoy fell in love in 1856 and seriously thought of marrying. She sounds like an amiable, accommodating girl: "The trouble is she has no bones and fire—just like noodles," her critical swain wrote to a mutual friend, and he sent Valeriya endless letters telling her how to spend every minute of her day, how to put on her corset and stockings (she must learn to put them on herself and not have the maid do it for her), and always to be sure to perform at least one good deed every day:

The main thing is—live in such a way that when you go to bed you can say to yourself: today (1) I did good to someone and (2) I became a little better myself. *Please, please* try to plan the day's occupations in advance.... You'll see what a tranquil but great pleasure it is to say to yourself every day: today I've been better than yesterday.

Touching as this may be, one can't help feeling that Valeriya must have been driven out of her mind; and yet we see again that in spite of all this tyrannical absurdity, Tolstoy is too genuinely serious to sound self-important: However comical his absorption is, he is never pompous. After he gave up the notion of marrying Arsenyeva, Tolstoy wrote *Family Happiness*, in which he imagines such a girl as gradually coming to terms with a demanding and difficult husband.

The letters written to Sonya Behrs both before and after their marriage are curiously lacking in his typical kinds of vitality. The most remarkable letter of this period describes to his sister-in-law, Tanya, the original of Natasha in *War and Peace*, a long "dream" Tolstoy had in which his wife became a china doll. Detail after detail comes out in the best Tolstoyan manner—how Sonya's legs stood on a china base that had a brown tree stump artistically attached, how he managed to take her to bed because she couldn't get in by herself, and so forth. The long, rambling, elegant account is more reminiscent of Kafka and his world of powerful but subdued family significances than anything we normally associate with Tolstoy. Undoubtedly he was much attached to his sister-in-law and felt more at home with her than with his wife, but the tone of this curious letter is hard to gauge: It is more affectionate toward the new china creature and more solicitous of her (Sonya was pregnant at the time) than any conventional psychological explanation would indicate. Tolstoy may have been frustrated by his wife's lack of amorousness. He may even, as the editor suggests, have been "disinfecting" with elaborate humor a more sinister dream of Sonya's in which she had seen herself destroying a doll representing the natural son of Tolstoy and a peasant woman, with whom he had lived at Yasnaya Polyana before his marriage. What is certain is that the Behrs family regarded Tolstoy's dream as simply a fine, humorous jeu d'esprit by their gifted son-in-law.

As the picture of Tolstoy that emerges from the letters darkens toward his old age, it moves us with a sense of the pathos deep down in the fabled giant who is exchanging letters of a quite singular boredom with such distinguished fellow pacifists and vegetarians as Gandhi. Tolstoy's chief disciple, the formidable and slightly creepy ex-guards officer Chertkov, obtained more and more influence over him, seeking to secure for the Tolstoyan movement the huge profits from his copyrights and thereby to deny them to Tolstoy's own family. In a painful letter, Tolstoy replies humbly to this all-too-masterful follower, admitting that he should not have let his wife come between them or have any influence over their friendship. It is not surprising that toward the very end of his life, when everything he wrote was jealously scrutinized and preserved by disciples or members of the family planning memoirs, he should have begun to write what amounts to a secret correspondence with himself. Most of this can only be inferred, but a surviving note records his passionate desire for the simple love and comfort he associated with his mother, who died before he was old enough to remember her. As with Citizen Kane's memory of "Rosebud," this longing was the last movement of his soul. The desire for the vanished comfort of a maternal breast drove Tolstoy from home at last and into the arms of that death which he had always so greatly hated and feared. ◉

John Bayley is Warton Professor of English Literature at St. Catherine's College, Oxford. He is the author of Tolstoy and the Novel; Pushkin: A Comparative Commentary; *and, most recently,* An Essay on Hardy.

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Flying High

Airships
by Barry Hannah
Knopf, 224 pp., $8.95

Reviewed by Tim O'Brien

BEGIN WITH the title: *Airships*. Swooping or drifting or hovering, many of the stories in this collection move as if on wind—no engines, no rattling machinery, no rudders or ailerons or vertical stabilizers. Some of the stories are purely airborne. Not machineborne, *air*borne. One soars, another dives, another performs stunning flip-flops at high speed—barnstormer's stunts, spinning end over end and then pulling out in the nick of time. Airships, not airplanes. Riding many of these stories is like riding the sea, or a dirigible, or a glider on a lazy summer's afternoon, everything soft and buoyant. Riding others is like riding a gale. Destination is often irrelevant. What counts most is the ride.

In part, all this is simply a way of getting a grip on Barry Hannah's style of prose—fluttery, diaphanous, jerked hither and thither by changes in the currents. But beyond style, the notion of "airships" seems an apt summary of Barry Hannah's posture as an artist. In each of these tales, he reminds us that fiction is make-believe. Stories not only ride the air, they are *made* of air. Prick them and they disappear. By creating patently preposterous situations, or by jumping backward or forward in time, or by jamming a dozen weird happenings into a single page, Hannah deliberately and even gleefully shatters the very spells he has worked so hard to cast. Bang, he breaks the bubble of illusion. He deflates his own airships. But then, wizard that he is, he pumps them up again, sends them aloft, gulls us into rebelieving in their substance and reality. The effect is unnerving. In the best of the stories, we know that the events and characters are all make-believe and yet we can't help surrendering to them. In others, the zaniness and implausibility become so overwhelming that even Hannah's fine prose cannot make the stories fly. The tension between credibility and incredibility, between wanting to believe in a story and fearing to believe in it, is what gives the best of these tales their power and distinction and mastery; this same tension, wound to the breaking point, is what keeps a few of the stories on the ground.

In "Love Too Long," the second tale in the collection, this tension is most apparent. "My head's burning off and I got a heart about to bust out of my ribs," the narrator begins. The man is in love, suffocating from love for a woman to whom he has been twice married and twice divorced, a woman who now buzzes his house in an upside-down airplane, a woman who is unfaithful in the extreme. We are hooked into sympathy by the very bluntness of the man's confession:

> I want to rip her arm off. I want to sleep in her uterus with my foot hanging out. Some nights she lets me lick her ears and knees. I can't talk about it. It's driving me into a sorry person. Maybe Hobe Lewis would let me pump gas and sell bait at his service station. My mind's around to where I'd do nigger work now.

Battered by that sort of language, who can doubt the poor slob's love for his woman? Who can withhold pity?

But just as we are aching with the man's grief over the errant ways of his wife, Hannah dispatches a naked woman into a crowded bar. Not only nude, the woman is brandishing a shotgun. Soon she is on her husband's lap, disarmed, and her breasts are being sucked. Well, sure—we laugh, or we smile. But that's the end of our sympathy, and it's also the end of our trust in the story. The spell is broken. After the narrator offers this zany anecdote, who can maintain belief in his great anguish? Who can then swallow the story's apothegmatic (and superfluous) final line: "I'm going to die from love"?

But then consider "Midnight and I'm Not Famous Yet," one of the most remarkable stories in this collection. It's a Vietnam story, sort of. But it's not the kind of tale that will be heard at a VFW convention 20 years from now. Again, Hannah throws implausibilities into carefully wrought plausibilities, but in this case the device works wonderfully. The story takes off and flies and does loops in the sky, and though we realize it's impossible, we can't help making it possible in our imaginations. Start out with two men from Vicksburg, Mississippi. Have them meet up in Vietnam. Bobby Smith is a war-hardened army captain; his pal, Tubby, is a photographer. Together they parachute into a hot area in an operation designed to halt the advance of a North Vietnamese Army (NVA). Although funny and peculiar things happen during all this, the narrative remains credible enough. But then, into the narrative marches Li Dap, an oddball NVA general who has studied the tactics of Robert E. Lee. As an officer, Li Dap models himself after Jeb Stuart, the gallant general of the Confederate army during the American Civil War. (Stuart, in name and in person, appears in many of these tales). Unfortunately for Li Dap, it turns out that Stuart was dashing and daring but not too bright, and so soon enough the boys from Vicksburg capture the NVA commander. Funny stuff follows, then sad stuff. Tubby dies. The NVA keeps advancing. More bloodshed, and the enemy closes in. In desperation, the narrator resorts to a phosphorous-shooting shotgun—a nightmarish weapon that symbolizes the technological overkill of the American war machine. The gun is indiscriminate. Its huge killing radius fries Americans and trees and the captured commander and everything else in sight. No aiming. No picking of targets. Hot phosphorous incinerates distinctions between friend and foe:

> But I couldn't pick and choose.
> I burned them all up.
> Nobody even made a squeak.
> There was a flare and they were gone.
> Some of my boys rushed over with guns.

All they were good for was stomping out the little fires on the edges.

"Face it, Marge, there's nothing you get at the movies that you can't get watching T.V. at home."

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Here, in "Midnight and I'm Not Famous Yet," the combination of credibility with incredibility is effective because it works in the service of its theme. War *is* a mix of the absurd and the deadly real. War *is* often fought more by machines than by men, or by machines that limit and dictate what men do, or by men who act like machines. Killing *does* become haphazard in war. Commanding officers sometimes *do* ape the style of Jeb Stuart, and soldiers often *do* pay the price for such mimicry. Forging these facts into a dramatic vehicle, Hannah uses his technique to carry the story—the airship—to a thematic destination. As pilot, he points this ship, and that lifts it above those stories in the collection that sail or spin without apparent direction.

One such aimless tale is called "Coming Close to Donna." The scene is a cemetery. Two fellows are engaged in a fistfight. They are battling for the rights to a pink-haired hussy named Donna. Meanwhile, on the sidelines, Donna herself is making it with the narrator of the story, a fat chap who may or may not be gay. The two fighters kill each other. What does Donna do? "Touch me," she tells the fat boy. "Make me know I'm here." So he touches her, privately, and later Donna performs "a tender unnatural act" on the dead suitors, and then, later still, the insatiate Donna demands even more from the narrator, who does his best. Break. Six months later, Donna is numb with heroin, but she still wants to be climbed upon and fought over and, well, violated and reviolated. So back to the graveyard, where the narrator finally crushes her skull with a tombstone. The story ends: "Some of us are made to live for a long time. Others for a short time. Donna wanted what she wanted. I gave it to her."

If there is a point here, it is tough to find. Fiction need not be always instructive, nor always pregnant with meaning, but it should offer something more than unstrung pearls of absurdity, however lustrous.

Yet in the very next story, Hannah presents pearls on a string: a strong narrative and thematic linkage. "Dragged Fighting from His Tomb," one of several tales set during the American Civil War, explores the shifting loyalties among soldiers, the nihilism that war can produce in the human soul, the soldier's desperation in seeking something to cling to and believe in amid the horror.

A Confederate soldier demands of his Yankee prisoner: "Tell me *something*. Tell me *something wise*!"

"There is no wisdom, Johnny Reb," answers the Yankee. "There's only tomorrow if you're lucky. Don't kill us. Let us have tomorrow."

Amok in carnage, unable to find any other object or man to love, the Confederate soldier can show tenderness only to the horses he rides into battle. He cradles a dying horse in his arms, he uses paper to plug up the wounds of another, he murmurs to his horses and believes they understand. Shedding tears for a mortally wounded steed, the soldier is told by Jeb Stuart: "Use your weeping on people, not on animals." And this sets the soldier into a frenzy. For if Jeb Stuart would weep for people but not for animals, "What are we doing killing people in Pennsylvania?" The insubordination gets the soldier arrested; but soon he escapes, changes into a blue uniform, mounts another horse, and rides off to find and kill General Jeb Stuart. Why? Partly out of revenge, but mostly because Stuart would waste tears on *neither* horses nor people.

This story too contains elements of the implausible—the appearance of Jeb Stuart, the shooting of Jeb Stuart, acts of carnal lust in the midst of battle, horses that obey shouted orders like well-disciplined recruits—but a treacherous balance between realism and surrealism is always maintained. Neither one nor the other, the story becomes its own category of fiction.

In other stories, particularly in the long "Testimony of Pilot," Barry Hannah shows that he can spin a sustained and realistic narrative when the mood and material fit. He gives us splendid descriptions of a small southern town, a plot that unfolds like wings, freshly wrought characters, a beginning and a middle and an end.

Through all the stories, those that fly and those that don't, there is Hannah's unique use of language. His voice. Neat oxymorons: "tender hate." Strange and jarring similes: "The prospect of Lilian asleep in my apartment made me feel like a chaplain on a visit to the Holy Land." Sweet similes: "skin like mayonnaise." (Mayonnaise, a word that conveys not only color but also texture—spreadability, smoothness.) Cunning adjectives: "the hot null blue of the sky." (Null! Of course!) And funny lines: "She made Levaster's bride look like something dumped out of a ship, a swathed burial at sea."

Airships is the first winner of the Arnold Gingrich Short Fiction Award, sponsored by *Esquire* and Alfred A. Knopf. Hannah's talent is unmistakable, and he deserves the prize. •

Tim O'Brien is the author of Going After Cacciato.

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Books in Brief

Violet Clay
by Gail Godwin
Knopf, 352 pp., $10

In her fourth novel, Gail Godwin creates a male-female relationship that breaks compellingly with the strident ones in so much of the fiction by and about women in recent years.

Violet Clay and Ambrose Clay, who see each other scarcely twice a year, lead separate yet inseparable lives. At thirty-two, Violet is lost somewhere in her metamorphosis from commercial artist to painter; Ambrose, her graying uncle, secludes himself in a mountain cabin in a last struggle to recapture his early success as a writer but fails and kills himself. After his suicide, Violet decides to rent the cabin herself, to paint and to face her "demons," as Ambrose faced his. In casting the young woman in two scenarios played simultaneously, Godwin analyzes the symbiotic bond between Violet and her uncle. And Ambrose's unfinished work, the novel within Godwin's novel, is a flash of greatness.

Alongside this relationship run others, a few of them irrelevant. As in her earlier fiction, Godwin's women outshine her men, with the exception of Ambrose. (This is hardly a flaw—Hemingway's women are no match for his men.) There is Samantha, a beefy, silver-blonde Valkyrie who is as earthy as her image in myth is airy, and Minerva Means, a childlike seventy-year-old with a magnificent memory.

Perhaps Godwin works in too many complexities, such as dreams and parallel plots, for the classic lines of her novel. Or perhaps this is just a contemporary critic's bias. For "classic" in the sense of nineteenth-century realism can imply a bigness, a roaming down corridors and into rooms. Godwin has been one of our major novelists since *The Odd Woman* was acclaimed a few years ago, and *Violet Clay* shows that she is becoming an even more searching and involving writer.

—JOHN FLUDAS

Hello, I Must Be Going: Groucho and His Friends
by Charlotte Chandler
Doubleday, 696 pp., $10.95

As this account of Groucho Marx's last years shows, Groucho was sometimes as funny just being himself as he was when playing the impresario Otis B. Driftwood, the doctor Hugo Z. Hackenbush, or any other of his zany film characters. Take the time the preeminent Marx brother went to a fortune-teller in Chicago, for example. The fortune-teller was in a trance when Groucho approached, so he waited patiently, breathing in the incense. Finally the seer spoke: "Ask me any question, and I will answer it."

"What's the capital of North Dakota?" asked Groucho. Suddenly, two large black men emerged from the shadows and hustled him out.

By the time Groucho reached his eighties, however, he had turned into something of an old grouch. Charlotte Chandler laboriously details all the things he had to be grouchy about—poor health, impotence, the death of friends, his inability to work—but as she tells it, the story of Groucho's declining years loses all its poignancy.

Hello, I Must Be Going developed out of a *Playboy* interview that Chandler did with Groucho in 1974. Apparently she figured that it was a winning format, for the present book is not so much written as transcribed: We get to hear Chandler talking with Groucho, Groucho talking with his friends (Bill Cosby, Jack Nicholson, Woody Allen, and other lesser known show biz people), and these friends talking about him. But because Chandler has not edited these conversations, the interviews produce the same Groucho lines over and over. Worse, most of these friends are bent on out-witticizing Groucho. The results are dire. Only Woody Allen plays it completely straight, allowing us to catch a glimpse of the Groucho who was neither prankster nor crank but the Groucho who was fully human.

This book is a far cry from duck soup. Only Grouchomaniacs will have the patience to hunt through the mishmash for the good bits.

—JOHN SEDGWICK

Fighter: The True Story of the Battle of Britain
by Len Deighton
Knopf, 320 pp., $12.50

Len Deighton, author of *The Ipcress File* and other spy thrillers, has turned his hand with commendable results to the writing of military history. *Fighter* is the story of the air war over Britain, primarily during the critical months of August and September 1940, that was a significant part of the larger operation we call the Battle of Britain.

At the outset of World War II, military flying was still in a formative stage, although it had clearly outgrown the dogfights, with all their bravado and color, of the First World War. In the interwar years, aviation "experts" reached the conclusion that the function of the air arm was in large measure an offensive one: to carry out bombing raids against the enemy. Victory would go to the side that struck first and hardest. Furthermore, the experts could envision no effective defense against the bombers. (If this had proved true, Germany's Luftwaffe would have quickly brought Great Britain to submission, for the German bombers greatly outnumbered those of the RAF.)

Fortunately, a few air-minded strategists, foremost among them Air Marshal Hugh Caswell Dowding, recognized the value of the fighter plane as a defensive weapon. Under Dowding's direction, the Spitfires and Hurricanes of the RAF, superior in performance if not in number to the German Messerschmitts, defeated Goering's bomber fleets when they appeared in the skies over England. Hitler's timetable was wrecked; Operation Sealion, if it had been taken seriously at all, was abandoned, and the fuehrer turned his attention to the Balkans and to Russia.

There is a profusion of detail in *Fighter*, much of it involving weaponry and tactics, that will delight the military history specialist, and Deighton's well-paced narrative and techniques of deft characterization will also hold the attention of the general reader. The book profits further from an informative introduction by historian A.J.P. Taylor and from an interesting array of cleverly captioned photographs.

—GEORGE H. REEVES

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TRADE WINDS

High Philosophical and Everyday

by William Cole

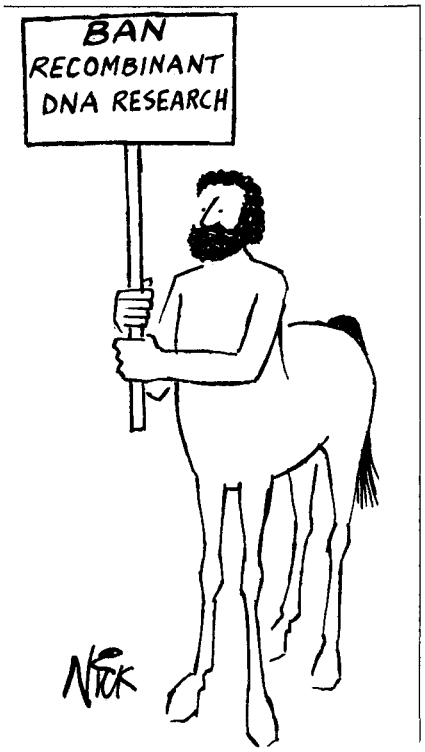
Twelve years ago, Viking published the *Collected Poems* of the great Australian poet A. D. Hope, who surely ranks with the world's best. Since then, I've been muttering that some publisher should bring out the work of his peer Judith Wright. And now, Houghton Mifflin has just published in its New Poetry Series *The Double Tree: Selected Poems 1946–1976* ($11.95 cloth, $6.95 paper). Born in 1915, Judith Wright has published 12 books of poetry and is simply a magnificent poet who deals with high philosophical matters and everyday domestic ones. Here's "Birds," one of the finest poems I've ever run in this column:

Whatever the bird is, is perfect in the bird.
Weapon kestrel hard as a blade's curve,
thrush round as a mother or a full drop of water
fruit-green parrot wise in his shrieking swerve—
all are what bird is and do not reach beyond bird.

Whatever the bird does is right for the bird to do—
cruel kestrel dividing in his hunger the sky,
thrush in the trembling dew beginning to sing,
parrot clinging and quarrelling and veiling his queer eye—
all these are as birds are and good for birds to do.

But I am torn and beleaguered by my own people.
The blood that feeds my heart is the blood they gave me,
and my heart is the house where they gather and fight for dominion—
all different, all with a wish and a will to save me,
to turn me into the ways of other people.

If I could leave their battleground for the forest of a bird
I could melt the past, the present and the future in one
and find the words that lie behind all these languages.
Then I could fuse my passions into one clear stone
and be simple to myself as the bird is to the bird.



Brushes with Celebrities

How's this for a title: *About Burt Britton, John Cheever, Gordon Lish, William Saroyan, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Kurt Vonnegut and Other Matters* (Horizon, $7.95 cloth, $3.95 paper). It's a book featuring interviews—no, brushes—with the above-named, plus a lot of snappily written essays and observations by Morris Lurie, a young Australian journalist. You recognize Cheever, Saroyan, Singer, and Vonnegut; the other two are "in" names on the New York literary scene: At the time of Lurie's brush with him, Lish was the influential fiction editor of *Esquire*; he's now an equally influential editor at Knopf. Burt Britton, at the time of *his* brush, was Mister Bookman at the huge Strand bookstore, and he put together *Self-Portrait: Book People Picture Themselves* (Random House, $12.50 cloth, $6.95 paper), which was the most flip-throughable book of last year.

Now to shift the scene, in mid-June, Britton and Jeannette Watson (daughter of IBM's Thomas Watson) are opening a ritzy bookstore on ritzy Madison Avenue "three doors below the Whitney Museum." Britton says it will be a "real bookstore." Their noteworthy aim is to stock all the books in print by important authors—not just their current books but *everything*. I reminded him of a bookseller we both know who refused to stock any Robbins, Wallace, or Susann, referring would-be buyers to a nearby department store. He went out of business. "I know," Britton said. "We'll sell the garbage too—but only the current garbage." So if your bookseller is loath to order back books by, say, Tennessee Williams, Mailer, Updike, Malamud, or Ashbery, drop a note to Books & Co., 939 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021.

Of Appas and Ithyphallic

The response of the critics to W. M. Spackman's *An Armful of Warm Girl* has been warm, as has been the readers' response to my puzzlement about some words in that remarkably worded book. I specifically asked for a definition of *appas*, which turns out to be French, although it wasn't italicized in the book. Thirty-five readers have informed me that the word means "feminine charm, attractions; a woman's bosom." One reader said it was a French hunting and trapping term, and two hazarded that it was Greek for "religious official" and that it was a term of endearment. My *Larousse* defines it as "charms." In the same column, I mentioned *ithyphallic*, and a reader has sent me a clipping from *The Illustrated London News* about archaeological digs in Naples: "Discoveries included... the famous little ithyphallic tripod, copies of which were later sold to Victorians in a discreetly emasculated form." That sounds pretty explicit.

A Good Slap of Them

I've read a half dozen of John Gould's books, always with enjoyment and audible laughs. Now here comes his reminiscences of Maine life, *This Trifling Distinction* (Little, Brown, $7.95). Fishermen, hunters, newspapermen—even Maine writers—in good old homespun anecdotage. And Maine words—how about "a dite"? Mean anything to you?

Two carpenters were moving a small building onto a new foundation, and one of them says, "Shove it my way a dite!" The other shoved, but shoved a little too hard.

"Nope—too much! I said a dite!"

Two dites might make a smidgen, and two smidgens a dab. A dab is just a little more mashed potatoes, please. But a dollop of mashed potatoes is a good slap of them. ◉

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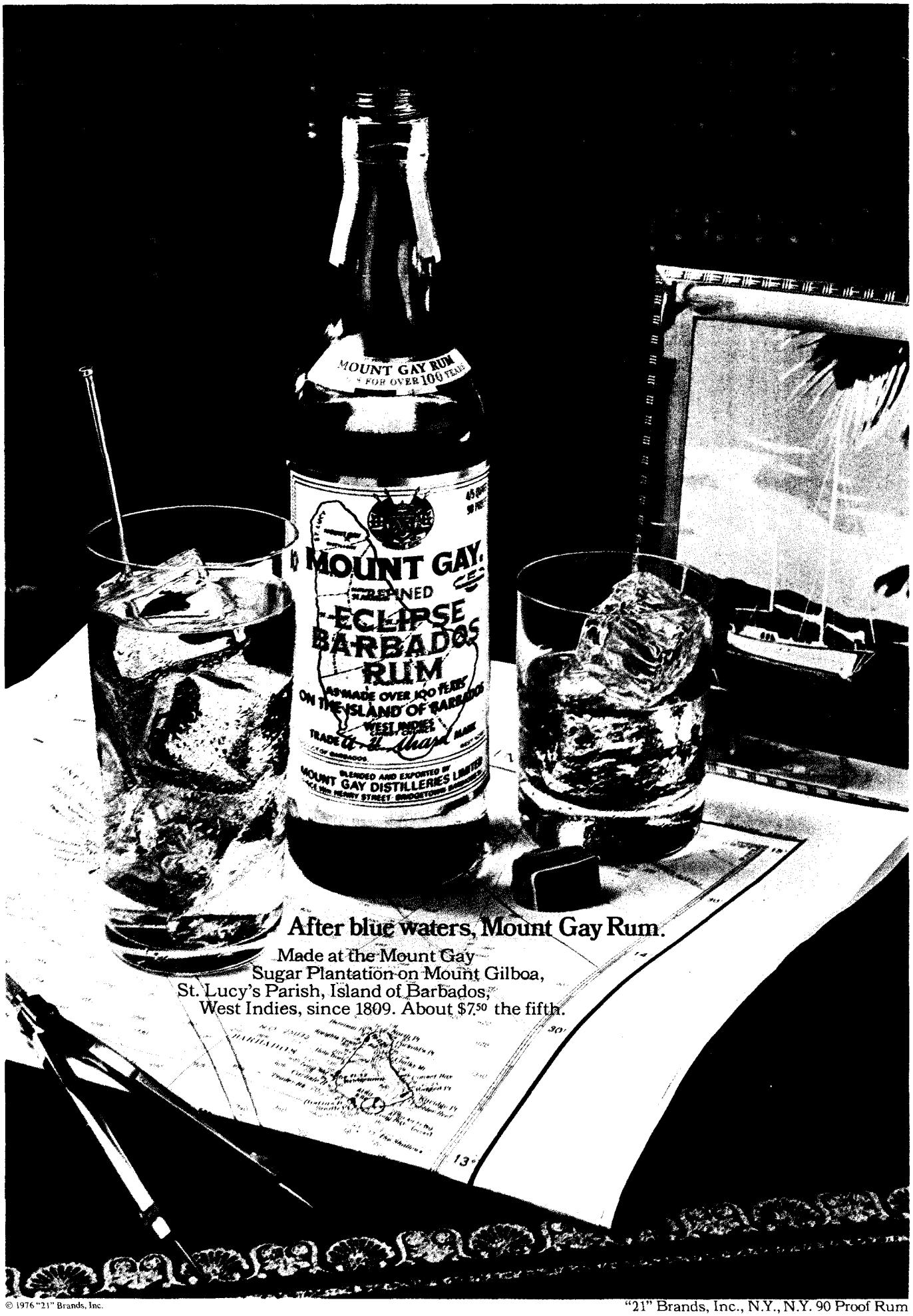

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FINE PRINT

A Rare Find: "Two Tales by Charlotte Brontë"

by Doris Grumbach

IN HIS BOYHOOD, Bramwell Brontë was given 12 toy soldiers, which he shared with his sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne. Around "The Twelve," as they called them, the four youthful writers created 140 manuscripts—stories about the adventures of the lords and ladies, and a few commoners, of an imaginary kingdom. Two of these stories, "The Secret" and "Lily Hart," have now been lovingly and carefully reproduced for the first time in *Two Tales by Charlotte Brontë* (University of Missouri Press, $28; deluxe edition, $65).

The story of the discovery of the manuscript is itself of interest. Lost for more than 120 years (this is not surprising, since the book is minute: four and a half inches long by three and five-eighths inches wide, written in tiny script on four folded sheets of notepaper, making a 16-page folio of 19,000 words), it was found among the papers of the wife of Senator Stuart Symington after her death, in 1973, and presented by her son to the University of Missouri.

Using the pseudonym Charles Wellesley, Charlotte Brontë wrote these two stories in 1833, when she was seventeen, and she and Bramwell illustrated them. This superb edition, transcribed and edited by William Holtz, presents the stories both in facsimile of their original minuscule shape and transcribed into a readable text, with only a few illegible words missing.

Charlotte's style by the time she wrote *Jane Eyre* had been refined, and her concept of character and plot, enlightened. But in these girlhood stories, sentimentality is everywhere, and elements of the Gothic romance echo in every line. Mr. Rochester of *Jane Eyre* is clearly the literary descendant of Douro, a hero who appears in both the early tales. Great love and terrible suffering are the themes: In "The Secret," Marian Hume hides what appears to be the secret of her birth and youthful betrothal from her demanding but loving husband. In the second story, Lily Hart, a virtuous though poverty-stricken woman is raised to the highest aristocracy by good fortune, a secret marriage, and obedience to her husband. Both stories end happily but abruptly, as though the young author had stumbled upon the resolution of the plot before she was quite prepared for it. The resolution in "The Secret" follows the denouement within two paragraphs, a case of the hasty cart directly behind the balking horse. The royal family of Prince John appear suddenly in "Lily Hart" and within a few sentences accept his plebeian wife.

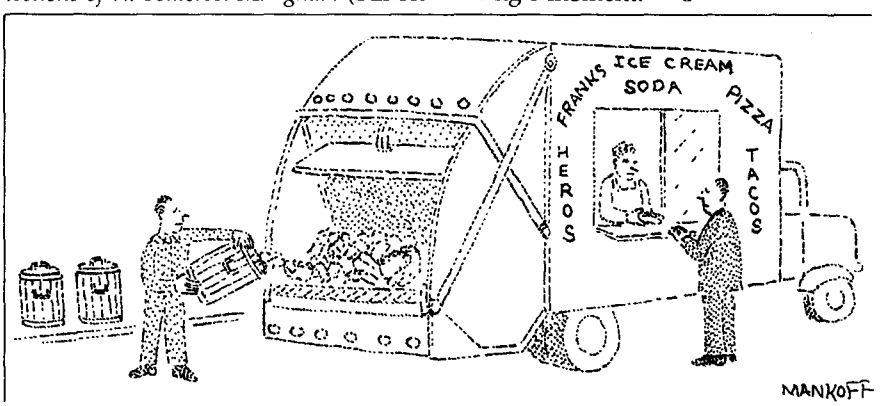
William Holtz, who has done an admirable job of annotating and editing these manuscripts, concedes that the immature work of great writers often has little value. These "slight but charming tales" might well fall within that evaluation. But there is some value in having these stories. Charlotte, Holtz tells us, was committed to her imaginary characters: When we read "the achieved power of *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*" after "Lily Hart" and "The Secret," we see that the novels "did not spring unprecedented from a mind turned late to fiction. Rather, they are the culmination of a passionate life of writing" begun early in efforts "diminutive and crudely drawn."

Besides offering the pleasures of the text, this edition will please the lover of good bookmaking. The facsimiles, in both their original and their photographically enlarged states, are fascinating and are well done by Meriden Gravure. There are illustrations drawn by the Brontës themselves. In short, the enterprising University of Missouri Press has done everything possible to make the literary find an absorbing and aesthetically valuable possession.

Robin Maugham's old uncle was very famous, very cantankerous, unhappy, nasty, disappointed, tired, and ill-tempered. We have read about him and his relatives before in his nephew's *Somerset and All the Maughams*. In this new book, *Conversations with Willie: Recollections of W. Somerset Maugham* (Simon & Schuster, $10), the author of *The Moon and Sixpence* and *Of Human Bondage* is portrayed as "a very old person," aged ninety-one, reconstructed from Robin Maugham's apparently excellent notes of his visits with his uncle at the end of his life.

This is a touching and compassionate, yet sharp and honest view of a man who, it turns out, was desolated 20 years before his own death by the premature death of the great love of his life, Gerald Haxton. Maugham spent his remaining years racked by loneliness, despair, fear, and self-doubts. Robin Maugham tells this sad chapter beautifully. A skilled novelist, he writes directly and spares no truths, yet he shows understanding and pity for the old man who once, astonishingly, offered to settle a fortune on him if he would give up his male lover and his writing career.

Somehow Somerset Maugham knew that his fame (he could only be restored to good temper by being reassured that he was the greatest writer alive) would not outlast his life: "They'll [his books] be forgotten, of course." He wandered the rooms of his magnificent Villa Mauresque forgetful, haunted, and hopeless, insulting and rejecting his few remaining friends. He believed his life had been a long series of failures caused by his overbearing father, his lifelong stammer, his family's scorn of him, his older brother's treatment and hatred of him. "What is the happiest memory of your life?" his nephew asked him as they sat in his magnificent drawing room, looking out over the Mediterranean, surrounded by 11 servants and his faithful secretary and companion of 20 years, Alan Searle. His tragic reply was, "I cer-can't think of a single moment." ◉



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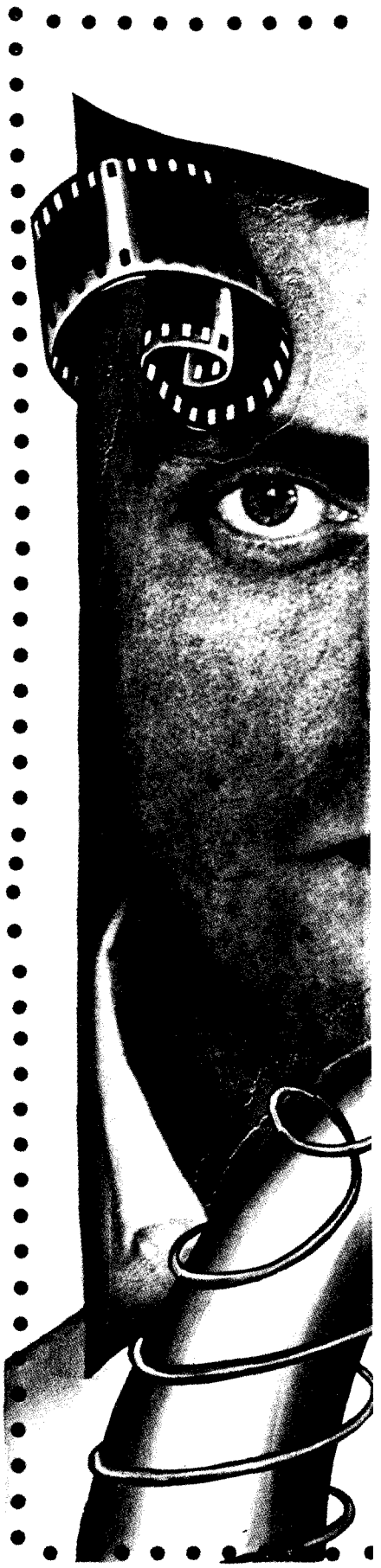
SATURDAY REVIEW: PLEASURES

THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL FUTURE OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT



by Ivan Berger

PREDICTIONS ABOUT coming developments in electronic entertainment are always risky because they are too conservative in the long run, too wildly unbelievable in the short. One can extrapolate only from known trends—which are usually generating their own radical replacements by the time they become really known. What follows, then, is "safe" extrapolation, valid for perhaps 5 to no more than 15 years.

Embrace the Future: It's Going to Embrace You Back

Just punch the buttons in the media home of tomorrow, and your walls will bombard, massage, or lull your senses with enveloping experiences. At your command, they will become the opera house, the western plains, deep space, or active wallpaper. Nor will you just observe or just experience: Plug in a keyboard, and you can participate.

Music, of course, will still survive. It is unique, the first of the abstract arts and the only one that leaves our eyes free for other simultaneous activities. One can read, knit, or drive to music; dashboard TV on the other hand must await the car equipped with an autopilot. As to the inroads of electronics on live performance, most of that damage has already been done.

But sound reproduction is about to change in ways that could affect the way we make music as well as the way we hear it. The revolution we now face is the change to digital recording: Instead of recording *all* the undulations of a musical wave form, digital systems numerically record the values of that signal at each of three million separate instants every minute. The values of an undulation are impossible to check precisely; but the values of a list of numbers that follow the pattern of undulation can be checked and checked again, ensuring that the final recording you hear at home is exactly the same as the original. One result is much cleaner, clearer sound.

But that is only one result. Another is that whatever can be precisely preserved can be precisely altered too. This fact gives recording engineers more chances to change sound creatively—for good or for ill. It also gives them more chances to correct old errors, as in the recent restorations of Caruso records.

As home reproduction equipment becomes more sophisticated and as more and more homes have computers (already, over 600 stores sell to this market), the home listener will be able to alter freely not just one variable but many: tempo, dynamics, room acoustics, even the number of reproduction channels. All this will restore more than just a measure of participation to home listening; it will even let you conduct recordings so the records follow your beat and dynamics.

Such computer controls are in the labs right now. At Technics, in Osaka, Japan, for example, I saw a "tone control" that automatically gives you whatever frequency response curve you draw on a computer display screen

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Miriam Wosk

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"The guy going down the street burbling 'deedle-deedle-dum-da-dum' may no longer be a crazy but an 'average' who has surrendered his head to the media stream."

with a "light pen." Such controls could also be automatic, with the system maintaining the same custom-tailored room acoustics at a given level, regardless of how many sound-absorbing people fill a room.

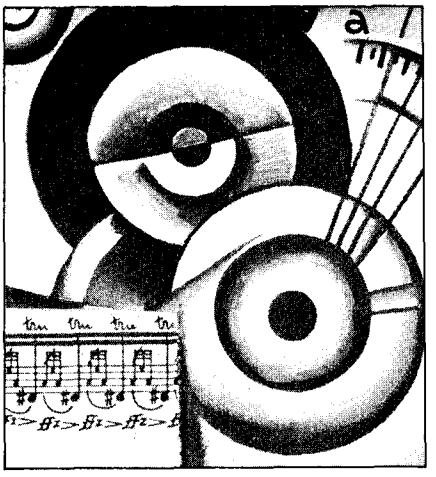
Digital sound implies another change, for a digital system is very close in some ways to a synthesizer. We can look on either analogue or digital systems as reproducers of recorded wave forms. But digital systems can also re-create those wave forms not from recordings but from sets of stored instructions. From that stage to the creation of original wave forms is just a small step (and one foreseen decades ago by Harry Olson, of RCA).

If we were to hook a keyboard to a digital sound system, we could insert a program to make the system reproduce with every key stroke the sound that would come from a Baldwin grand, a Bechstein, or a Bösendorfer—or even from a bagpipe. We would merely get our notes from one source (in this case, the keyboard), our encoded sonorities from another.

Compositions could be written for sequenced sonorities, their notes advancing across a TV screen "music stand" as we play them—no need to turn the pages by hand. Or if we wanted to write our own improvisations, the screen could display them, let us correct them, and then store them on tape or on sheet music at our command. (A device called Musecom does this already.) The computer terminal may become the scratch pad of tomorrow's composer.

This kind of composition is not what is usually termed "computer music." It involves neither the creation of music-as-computer programs nor the creation of music by computers. But such music could be created in tomorrow's home. The leading composers of 2001 may compose not music itself but algorithms, sets of rules by which computers can compose music in ways humans will find interesting. Computers may even be able to sense our mood somehow and to compose appropriate music to enhance or counteract that mood. Certainly they will be able to sense our presence, following us with music as we walk around the house (and switching off the lights behind us as we go).

Moreover, we may be able to solve "music lover's itch"—that nameless tune that keeps on running through our head. Whistle or hum the tune whose title you've temporarily forgotten, and if it's in your computerized record library, the computer will search its memory banks to find a match, displaying the titles of the works that seem to match and playing snatches of them for comparison; the more accurate your whistling, of course, the easier it will be for the computer to find the title.



Video: The Battle for Our Screens

We are now in the opening round of a massive battle for access to the television screen. It is not just stations and networks competing against one another but new sources of on-screen material competing with all of them. And unlike the networks' efforts to reach the largest common denominator, the battle that is beginning may lead to more interesting and varied viewing—by logical extension of the same economic factors that now make TV programming so mind-deadeningly restrictive.

As matters stand, anything other than mass programming is uneconomic altruism. A station's costs are relatively inelastic, whether its programs are seen by every possible viewer or by none. But its revenues depend in two ways on the size of its audience: The larger the audience, the more the station can charge for advertising time and the more such time it can sell. One might even add a mildly moral imperative to reach the mass: Because each station monopolizes one of a limited supply of channels and because two programs cannot share a time slot, anything that's broadcast prevents something else from being seen or heard. Programs directed at minority tastes automatically deprive the majority.

In print, however, time and economics have an opposite effect. The major costs—printing and distribution—vary with the size of readership, making it possible to reach minorities at a profit. A hundred magazines can share a newsstand (with room for others at the newsstand down the street). And they can sit there till a buyer comes along, not vanishing into the air after their half hour ends. By subscription, magazines can follow readers anywhere, scattering themselves to the ends of the earth; I know of successful scientific journals whose circulation worldwide is less than the audience a small-town radio station needs for its survival.

But these economic differences are blurring. With video tape, watching one program does not prevent your seeing a program on another channel at the same time: Just tape one while you watch the other. Tape lets you rearrange your viewing times to suit your schedule too, recording programs even when you're away, asleep, or otherwise unavailable.

For now, this could mean late-night programming designed to be taped by the affluent minority. When video recorders become common (very soon, now), "prime-time" programming will spread over a 24-hour program day, thus diluting the battle for the prime-time audience. The amount of specialized programming might even decrease, but the viewer's ability to choose from the available programming mix could increase.

That mix is already being fragmented by cable systems, which make available added channels of service, news, and entertainment. Such new developments as fiber optic cables carrying modulated laser beams will multiply the available number of channels reaching the home—and fragment the audience as well.

But the mass audience is composed of minority members: The millions watching *Happy Days* include fly-fishermen, gardeners, parents, joggers, pilots, audiophiles, chess players, and shade-tree mechanics. Given the inten-

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sity of personal interests and the near-interchangeability of much mass entertainment, the one cable channel with a program on flytieing may outdraw any of the 32 channels showing situation comedies at the same time.

Sources of programming will be multiplied by yet another development: satellite transmission, which will both increase the number of programs that can be networked and lower the cost of their transmission, making minority programming more economical. If home viewers equip themselves with antennas for direct satellite reception, stations and networks may even disappear and be replaced by individual programmers leasing satellite access. (Don't bet on that one, though.)

Videodiscs are coming too. And while you can't record your own discs, you will be able to buy them for less than video tape recordings cost (and for much the same reasons that make phonograph discs cheaper than recorded tapes). The economics here are very printlike because unlike the broadcast, which must grab its audience in an instant, a disc is around permanently and is able to build its audience slowly. An opera performance, no matter how well staged and sung, is never likely to outsell a popular rock concert in any given year. But the opera disc could still be selling steadily a decade later. And the same company could produce both opera and rock concerts profitably.

Programming Your Own Screen

Not all that reaches or competes for our video screens need come from outside sources. The screen can also display the output of our home computers or home movies made on video tape with color cameras (now available from JVC for about 50 percent more than the cost of the recorder but probably available from Toshiba soon for about the video recorder's price—with further price cuts yet to come) as well as become a game board for video contests of various sorts.

Add two-way communications to the screen, and you can play those games with other viewers across town (or across the state) and dial your local library for encyclopedia entries from a data bank that is updated daily. Broadcast or line-transmitted information services—such as Europe's CEEFAX, teletext, and Viewdata—may also appear. Libraries may transmit books by wire, not to be read from the screen—which is convenient for brief reference but uncomfortable for long text—but to be printed on attached facsimile machines, with royalties automatically credited to the authors. Even newspapers may appear this way—the headlines and lead paragraphs reaching the screen free while readers pay royalties for any stories they select to read in full.

Two-way cable has existed experimentally for several years. The latest version, Warner Cable's "Qube" system—available in Columbus, Ohio—lets the viewer participate in opinion polls and quiz show games, rate amateur show performances, bid in charity auctions, and even do some shopping at home.

Readers of *1984* will recognize a potential danger in this: If the home viewer ever loses control over what flows back from his cable, then his privacy is lost; without suitable precautions (not needed with Qube's current technology), there could prove to be a bug in the system.

Big Screens: Living Wallpaper?

Today's big-screen projection video is just an interim step awaiting high-brightness, high-resolution "picture tubes" made thin enough to hang on the wall. There's no telling when these will reach the market, but virtually every TV lab in the world has them under development.

The bigger the screen, the bigger the impact; and the flat screens could multiply to cover every wall of the room, creating a true media environment. TV will come out of its box—and we'll come *into* one.

Not that there need be programming on the walls at all times. Our walls can serve as light-pen blackboards (no need to wipe away the children's graffiti—we can just erase them), picture windows, works of art, light shows to accompany our music, and displays for wallpaper patterns.

The wallpaper will *do* things, though. You can dial a different color balance or make it more (or less) dimensional. To change the pattern, you can dial in another one—or have your decorator preview new patterns on your wall via cable. Dial the screen into becoming transparent, and it becomes a real window, possibly even changing its transparency to provide shade from bright sunlight.

But the bigger the image, the more visible the defects of our present 525-line video system (or even of Europe's finer 625-line system). Getting more information on the screen to fill those visual gaps and filling up the added screens would take more channel space. Here again, fiber optic cable and videodiscs should have the information capacity to provide the answer. There might even be information enough to allow stereo images, either within the screens or projected holographically into our living space. If such holographic images penetrate our rooms, we ourselves can then penetrate the image, rubbing shoulders with the visible ghosts of the performers: New program forms could well result.

Beyond the Screen

At the end of the media trail lies direct stimulation of the brain—infiltrating the mind, rather than surrounding it with images.

As an entertainment medium, direct input seems near perfect: One could involve all the senses, even scramble them to let the audience smell colors and taste chords. One could not only hear a musician play but experience his thought and emotional reactions as he plays. (Presumably, all thoughts of coming dinner or of after-concert dates would be filtered out before transmission.)

With all the senses involved, the audience is immune to distraction—and perhaps lost to consciousness as well. The possibilities for mind control, for ideas programmed into the sensory mix, are frightening. Equally frightening is the possibility of addiction to this new kind of "narcotic." And there is the further possibility of mere mindlessness: The guy going down the street burbling "deedle-deedle-dum-da-dum" may no longer be a crazy but an "average" who has surrendered his head to the media stream. At this point, the distinction between the average people and the crazies will break down—as will we. ◉

Ivan Berger, an editor of Popular Electronics, *has been covering electronic entertainment for* SR *since 1962.*

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SPORTING LIFE

Jogging Mania—Enough Already!

by Jonathan Evan Maslow

I'M SORRY to report that I missed the finish of the Boston Marathon this year—frankly, because I was attending one of the dozens of cocktail parties held to celebrate before, during, and after the event. At the very moment that a local lad named Bill Rodgers was putting on a daring last-minute sprint to win by scarcely two seconds over a divinity student from Texas named Jeff Wells, I was in a glass skyscraper, 10 floors above the action, standing at the open bar trying to decide whether the attractive young woman to my right was Jill Clayburgh and if so, what I could do about it. She wasn't, and I couldn't.

Nevertheless, I managed to pick up some scraps of rather interesting information from firsthand witnesses who had watched the runners collapse just outside the Star Supermarket in the Prudential Center. One tidbit was that the eighty-second running of the marathon was attended by a record 4,800 runners, 6,000 reporters, and 10,000 running apparel salesmen. Another was that the loathsome liquid called Gatorade is still the thirst quencher favored by long-distance runners. (The bone-dry Beefeater martini, which I have repeatedly recommended to marathoners, was nowhere to be found—at least on the racecourse.) Among the professional observers attending the accompanying bacchanalia, the white wine spritzer finished an easy first, with white rum and vodka and tonic coming in at place and show.

But I was telling you about the marathon. Judging by the tremendous turnout, running has assuredly reached its majority as a sport—oddly enough though, without producing a single Pelé or Reggie Jackson for the running masses to identify with. Strom Thurmond runs every morning, and so does Jackie Onassis. Pepsi-Cola chairman of the board Donald Kendall has set up a track outside corporate headquarters, where he runs every day in combat boots. But one doubts that any of them qualifies as a genuine hero. There are, to be sure, a few high priests, including Dr. George Sheehan, the New Jersey heart specialist who claims that running is the answer to aging, sexual lassitude, smoking, drinking, obesity, poor productivity, existential despair, and the nation's tight-money policy. But still, let's face it: If you've seen one marathon, you've seen them all. Ditto for running a lap around the golf course. Personally, I think the running craze is getting a bit out of hand.

I used to indulge in running myself, but that was long ago in high school, before bookies and stockbrokers reduced me to the wretch I am today. We were called "harriers" back then, and MacNulty, our red-faced coach, harried us up and down a half-mile incline known as Tower Hill (there was a white-spired church on top) until we were too drained to care very much about social studies or cheerleaders. The course we ran on race days was a bit over two miles, or two complete laps around the hill, and a friend and I planned our strategy together. At the starter's gun, we elbowed our way to the safe, anonymous middle of the pack. Once behind the church, far out of view of the judges, we neatly sidestepped the course markers and hid out behind a grove of thornbushes until the other racers returned on their second lap. Then we abandoned the bushes and dashed to the finish line, always placing, say, seventeenth or twenty-third, good enough to maintain the respect of our schoolmates but far enough behind the winners never to arouse suspicion. Using this invaluable lesson in sportsmanship, I became a writer, while my friend is a top official with a federal agency.

Of course running wasn't at all the phenomenon then that it is now. We didn't even know it was good for us. The other students in the lunchroom quite rightly jeered over their baked macaroni when we harriers nibbled at the borders of the boring lettuce sandwiches MacNulty intimidated us into eating. The only glory I ever got by harrying was winning a third-form English essay contest with a minute-by-minute account of a cross-country meet ("I churned up that forbidding hill, wondering at every step if I could go on"; I never mentioned the ploy of the thornbushes, even then having some inkling that entertainment and the naked truth were somehow incompatible). In any case, stung by the anonymity of it all, I gave up running for Chesterfield Kings.

I could kick myself now. When I think of how a book called *The Complete Book of Running*, by Jim Fixx, has held the top of the best seller heap for 22 straight weeks, my veins turn varicose with envy. I want to go down into the street and exercise the muscle called the voice box, shouting about life's unfairness. After all, my only crime was not catching the whiff of a coming trend. If I'd only held the line, I'd have made my fortune 10 times over by now. I could leave the wife and kids, run off with a redheaded actress, and no one would dare say two words about it. I could probably get tickets to the World Series, no problem. I'd hire someone to do my running for me—maybe Jim Fixx! "Get out there and do some roadwork for me, Fixx," I'd command. "And no supper until you drop from exhaustion." Ah, what sweet revenge there'd be in lying abed all afternoon with the Trinitron tuned in to the ball game, getting up only to appear on talk shows to testify how running changed my life. Which would be quite true.

By the best estimate I can find, 25 million citizens are habitués of the jogging glens. And a very good thing it is indeed to work off some of the national flab, getting some fresh air in the bargain. I'm all for that. But the sobering truth is that some of us are far too envious, competitive, and ambitious to be successful joggers. We are the silent, cowed majority who find no percentage in getting up at six-thirty on Sunday morning, dragging ourselves down to the local reservoir, chugging around it for a few laps, and returning home haloed by the blind optimism of having beaten the last best time we established on the previous Sunday. Confronted by the fanatical, proselytizing runners who corner us at social gatherings to tell us that pain and pleasure are actually two sides of the same coin, we find ourselves maundering "That's nice" (but thinking, "What a turkey") before drifting off to hear about the great new movie scripts everyone who isn't a jogger is writing these days. To us unregenerates, the essence of sports has nothing whatsoever to do with conquering ourselves but comes in sublime moments such as the one in this season's NBA play-offs, when Spencer Haywood slam-dunked the ball over George McGinnis, turned around grinning, and said to him, "In your face, George." We are the ones you see still spitting into our baseball

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gloves, ruthlessly tearing our arms from their sockets on tennis courts, and nursing war wounds on Monday morning—usually gained by bravado performances under the boards against sixteen-year-old playground superstars.

One runner told Fixx, "After a good run, you feel sort of holy." But I don't feel anything of the kind; I feel frustrated. I discovered this last year when I flirted with getting back into the jog of things. I went to Riverside Park, not far from my rooms on New York's Upper West Side, where the passing parade of youthful bodies in warm-up suits and matching Adidas is debilitating. Naturally, I had on the wrong sneakers, the wrong shorts, the wrong everything. Perhaps as a result, men loped by without so much as a "Nice day." Worse, my own affable greetings to the gracile young women runners along the trail were met by the iciest of stares. It was as though there were signs tacked to the trees warning: "No talking while jogging."

After a fortnight of suffering this silent treatment, I was out for blood—making five or six miles a day, all right, but spending every single second of my run trying to catch and pass whomever I saw ahead of me. Barring this, I resorted to the nastiest sort of criticism of my fellow joggers' gaits. There were the "poodles" (who ran with their paws up), the "bouncers," the "foot slappers," the "bovines," and so forth. When there was no one around to humble, I grew insufferably bored—since what, I ask you, is the point of competing against yourself? At the first sign of frost, I beat a retreat to the local basketball court, happy as could be to be back among the socially worthless competition of mortal athletes.

Thorstein Veblen noted long ago that sports are an expression of "predatory emulation" characteristic of barbarian culture and that "the temperament [that] inclines men to them is essentially of a boyish nature," marking "an arrested development of man's moral nature." I suppose it's that intriguing moral flaw—all that pranksterism and posturing and bragging and fraudulence—that attracts me to the baseball diamond, the hockey rink, and the boxing ring, whether to play myself or to watch the professionally immature or the morally underdeveloped. Like transcendental meditation and est, running seems to give its addicts the idea that humans are perfectible. But if that were true, I assure you God would never have created those thornbushes. ◉

BOOKED FOR TRAVEL

Near and Netherlandish

by Horace Sutton

The waterfront, St. Anna Bay—"Queen Emma is the biggest swinger in town."

THERE IS a certain curiosity about arriving in Curaçao by ship, as indeed there is, upon reflection, in departing by air. The captains of the cruise ships that regularly call at this Dutch outpost on the top of South America must thread the needle, as it were, into the narrows of St. Anna Bay, passing the old Waterfort on the one side and the equally historic Riffort on the other.

The Dutch, who recognized the import of the Schottegat, as they called the inner harbor—it has since become the fifth largest harbor in the world—built a fort on either side of the entrance and another atop a hill. The Waterfort was ultimately turned into a hotel, first an Inter-Continental and more recently the Curaçao Plaza, operated by Canadian Pacific. For guests who stay there, it is somehow unnerving to gaze idly out of, say, a bathroom window and to be waved at by someone on a deck passing by at eye level.

Willemstad, the city, grew up on both sides of St. Anna Bay, its principal settlement called Punda—the right bank as you face it—and the left bank, Otrabanda, which is to say, "the other side." The archives credit an American consul for the concept of connecting Punda and Otrabanda with a pontoon bridge that—though a fixed bridge now exists—is still in place, is still called the Queen Emma, and still swings from the Otrabanda side. The swinging, necessitated by the arrival or the departure of small boats and large, is accompanied by the ringing of bells and the flashing of lights. Tourists stop to watch, for the exercise involves not only the spectacle of the hinged bridge itself but the nimble leap of Curaçaoans who, despite the warnings, make the daring jump after Emma has escaped its latches on the Punda side.

The departure by air is curious not because it is exotic but because it is cumbersome. American Airlines, which took over the routes from Pan American some time ago and shares them with KLM and its island counterpart, ALM, brings in its passengers from New York, then boards its customers bound for New York. However, it makes a stop at neighboring Aruba, where it debarks its trippers who have come down from New York and elected to stay at Aruba rather than at Curaçao.

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Its northbound passengers, who have only just boarded at Curaçao and are trying to get to New York, must debark too and wait at Aruba for an hour, where they may buy Dutch chocolates and cheese at that island's attractive airport while the airplane is serviced. In that fashion, the airline avoids making two stops at Curaçao and thus, presumably, saves an extra landing fee.

As for the difference between the two islands (an inevitable question), both places are more interested in oil than in tourists, servicing the Venezuelan fields that were discovered in 1914. But Aruba has magnificent beaches and a modest riviera of hotels strung along it; Curaçao has less beach and more interest.

The Dutch took Curaçao from the Spaniards in 1634 and then years later brought in twenty-six-year-old Peter Stuyvesant as governor. He wasn't to lose a leg until he got into a fracas at St. Maarten, the island that is now part Dutch, part French, and all tourist. And he wasn't to lose a city until he took over as governor of the Grote Appel, which he was forced in 1664 to surrender to the British. Thus Nieuw Amsterdam became New York.

Europe wasn't socially compassionate in those times, but Holland, whatever its colonial policies may have been, had achieved a reputation for religious tolerance. The Puritans had to find sanctuary in Leiden before crossing the seas to America. Sephardic Jews, who were refugees from expulsion imposed by their Catholic Majesties in Spain, made their way from Brazil, where they had taken temporary refuge, and, landing in Curaçao, established the community called Mikve Israel, in 1651.

At one time, the Jews represented the majority of white settlers in Curaçao; and their synagogue, Mikve Israel-Emanuel, which was dedicated in 1732, is the oldest in the Americas. In the middle of Willemstad's bustling shopping area, where the cruise boat passengers scour the stores for watches, jewelry, and other purported bargains, Mikve Israel is one of the prime relics of colonial Americana. Blue windows cast a tinted shadow against the stark white walls. Brass chandeliers hang from the ceiling, and sand covers the floor—a tradition, some say, that derives from the wanderings through the desert. Others insist sand was used in the days of clandestine worship to muffle the sound of the assembling congregation.

A museum adjoining the synagogue will be of especial interest to Jewish visitors, containing as it does eighteenth-century silver menorah cups used to light oil lamps during the eight days of Chanukah and amulets containing psalms and prayers that function as protection against the evil eye.

Across the street, a shop displays the cheeses brought from Edam and Gouda, but in other windows the offerings are Pierre Cardin backgammon sets, Dior beachwear, gowns that bear the labels of Givenchy and Guy Laroche. Hand-blocked cottons designed in the Indonesian style and printed in Holland are popular with Venezuelans, who make up half the tourists who visit Curaçao.

Other Venezuelans come daily in their schooners—sloops, really—to set up a quayside floating market, selling yams, cassava root, pawpaw, bananas, pomegranates, mangoes, peppers, coconuts, tomatoes, and oranges.

Some signs are put up in Spanish—*basura*, for example, which means "trash." But the same invitation to drop one's litter is also displayed in Papiamento, a potpourri of African, Dutch, English, Spanish, and Portuguese. "Trash" comes out *sushi* in this lingua franca, but many of the words are so nearly distinguishable and so close to pig Latin and happy talk, they are like the pidgin of the South Seas. One could say *bon dia* for good morning, but then *moroo* would also do. The imprecation to drive slowly comes out *core poco poco*, and *masha danki* will do nicely for many thanks.

The Indonesia Restaurant provides a culinary link with the former Dutch East Indies, for which Hollanders maintain a marked affinity. A *rijsttafel*, or rice table, is served in two sizes, one of them offering 25 dishes, the other, 16 dishes, and both of them arriving with assorted sambals, which provide the high explosive spices the Indonesians, and Hollanders, prefer. Most Chinese restaurants will produce simpler island fare—*nasi goreng*, which is fried rice, shrimp, pork, and a fried egg on top, served with crisp *kropoek*, the delicate warm, thin wafers; or *bami goreng*, a dish that substitutes noodles for rice.

The hot sambals of Java are also sprinkled like dynamite dust on a concoction called *honde partie*—the dog's portion—a glorified remnant swept up in the departure from the East Indies. Today it is more than just the leavings for the family hound, for it includes rice, potatoes, steak, vegetables, and the ever-present fried egg, the whole of it mixed with curry and sambals.

Holland also has imported its celebrated *erwtensoep*, the pea soup some cook invented to take the chill off burghers who had spent the day on windswept canals. No real chills rattle the bones in these parts, but the soup is here nonetheless, thick enough to hold a spoon at attention.

Curaçao, itself an amalgam of Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, African, and nearby South Americans, has produced some originals. Ground shark meat is mixed with herbs and eaten with *funchi*, a cornmeal in the style of Italian polenta. *Keshi yena* borrows the Edam cheese from Holland and fills it with peppers, tomatoes, olives, raisins, and chicken.

There is an assortment of restaurants about town, aside from Indonesian and Chinese, some of them done in colonial style and others, continental. Fort Nassau, high on the hill, has been turned into an inn and what with its kerosene lamps and its tables overlooking the oil tanks seems like nothing so much as dining on the heights above Secaucus, N.J.

While much of the economy is wrapped up in the N. V. Curaçaosche Petroleum Maatschappij, also known as the Shell Oil Company, which maintains a large refinery and bunkering station here, hotels began to invite tourists to Curaçao during the last decade. Shell had built the Piscadera Bay Club as a residential bide-a-wee for its employees and guests. If the beach could scarcely compare with the Beau Geste sands of Aruba, the water was turquoise and aquamarine. As early as 1939, some early snorkelers were trying on masks to watch the fish.

The Piscadera Club ultimately gave way to a hotel site, and Hilton International moved in, creating a star-shaped pool, a beach where little sand existed, and a pier. Above it all rose an oblong of handsome rooms, and the Curaçao Hilton emerged as a warm-weather spa, with ballroom and casino.

There are a dozen lanai houses—to borrow a Polynesian term—for those who would prefer to be on sea level. Water skiers, deep-sea anglers in search of white and blue marlin, wahoo, and dolphin, sail out from the long pier, and so do those who venture out for a sunset sail in a 72-foot ketch.

Arthur Frommer, that lawyer turned *vagabondeur*, has opened an encampment above the Hilton works—94 cottages, albeit off the beach, but workable for light housekeeping, if that's your style. There is also a 100-room main building. A bus maintains liaison with the beach, 400 yards away.

The night life is as near as the Hilton, where a bridge over a moat leads to the supper club. Whatever the high jinks in that boisterous dell, Queen Emma remains the biggest swinger in town. ◉

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EDITORIAL: FREEDOM TO BREATHE

ONE DAY in 1966, we looked outside our office in New York and stared at the tall and billowing smokestacks of Consolidated Edison that punctuated the skyline at the eastern rim of Manhattan. A pall hung like a black gunnysack over the city's midtown. We stared balefully at the airborne incubus, then telephoned the Reverend Donald Harrington, the only person we knew who was close enough to the newly elected Mayor to register a direct complaint.

Less than 24 hours later, Mayor John V. Lindsay was on the telephone. "They tell me you don't like our air," he said.

We confirmed the report.

"Very well," he said. "As of this morning, you are going to be able to do something about it. I am announcing your appointment as head of the Mayor's Task Force on Air Pollution. You can select the other members of the commission. You will have my full backing."

The Mayor didn't have to twist our arm to accept. Hardly a day had passed in New York when we hadn't been overcome with a quixotic desire to tilt at every bus with a billowing backside or chimney in a state of wild spew.

The formation of the task force went surprisingly well. We wanted for our group not only environmental scientists and technicians but people who understood the engineering of public consent. We were lucky therefore to find such talented wordsmiths and publicists as William Bernbach, of the Doyle, Dane, Bernbach advertising agency, and William Jovanovich, of the publishing firm Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Among our experts were Robert A. Fox, Thomas J. Glennon, Dr. Harry D. Kruse, Ira R. Ehrlich, and Seymour Melman.

The first fact confronting the task force was that the quantity of pollutants in the air over New York was higher than that of any other major American city. We knew that a ghastly environmental disaster was by no means unlikely. For the most part, New Yorkers had been spared because of the presence of surface ventilating winds on all sides, in contrast to Los Angeles, where airborne poisons are often trapped by static air conditions. What was feared in New York, however, was a meteorological phenomenon known as "inversion." Under such a condition, the city would be like an indoor parking garage with all the doors closed and all the automobile engines running.

Actually, New York did come very close to an emergency during the yearlong period of the task-force study. A heavy concentration of pollutants coincided with near-inversion conditions. Fortunately, a crisis was averted by the sudden appearance of strong surface winds. Even so, the situation was serious enough, with the hospitals filled to overflowing with cases of emphysema and bronchitis.

Our task force had little difficulty in drawing up a program. The city government itself was probably the worst offender, with its mammoth incinerators and fuming buses and garbage trucks. Some city incinerators would have to be shut down altogether and an alternate method arranged for garbage disposal. Buses and trucks would have to be replaced with new models meeting rigorous standards. Some Consolidated Edison generating stations would have to be closed; most of the others would require electrostatic precipitators or scrubbers inside their smokestacks. Coal burning, with its heavy soot fallout, would have to be sharply reduced, whether for purposes of heating or energy. Especially was it important to ban the use of coal with high sulfur content.

The burning of construction wastes would have to be prohibited. All planes making use of the city's airport facilities would have to use chemical additives to reduce exhaust poisons.

The most important recommendation concerned the establishment of an environmental protection administration with authority to impose and collect penalties for violations.

We were told there was little chance of getting these measures through the city council. We were also told that even if the city adopted these proposals, they would become unenforceable with the supposedly inevitable waning of public interest and concern. Finally, we were told there was no way of persuading Consolidated Edison to spend millions of stockholders' dollars to close down its obsolete generating stations.

The alarmists were wrong on all accounts. Despite the various protests, the Mayor backed all our recommendations without exception. And with very few modifications, the proposals were enacted into law by the city council. The coal operators discovered a way to reduce the sulfur content in coal and still be competitive. The city cracked down on itself. Con Ed spent more than we had thought possible for replacing some plants and reconditioning others.

A decade later, what is the condition of the city's air?

Merril Eisenbud, the city's first Environmental Protection Administration head (as well as the country's first), has recently completed a profile of the quality of New York's air. His study shows it is a serious error to say that fundamental and dramatic improvements cannot be made in the quality of life in the United States or that Americans cannot sustain a reform experience. For the hard facts show that New York *has* reversed a serious trend. The aggregate of 730 pounds per person per year of noxious substances in the air has been cut by 80 percent. Sulfur dioxide, which was the worst offender, has been cut by almost 90 percent. The other sulfates, certain trace elements, and suspended particulates are all involved in the consistent reduction. From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in fact, come indications that the air over the entire country has been upgraded during the past 10 years. Serious problems such as airborne hydrocarbons still remain. But the American people can be encouraged to have confidence in the most important operating principle of a free society; namely, what is necessary is possible.

Now comes the biggest job of all: playing our full part in helping to clean up the world environment. —N. C.

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LIGHT REFRACTIONS

Ring Out, Wild Skies

by Thomas H. Middleton

IN THE Light Refractions of September 11, 1973, subtitled "The Divine Dizziness" (which is one of the columns reprinted in the book *Light Refractions*, distributed by Stein and Day), I mentioned Peter De Vries's book *Forever Panting*. In *Forever Panting*, I said, there's a character named Ginger, who talks largely in Gingerisms, which are statements like "People in show business always have a lot of irons in the fire, but few of them ever jell." I loved Ginger immediately. My wife, Jeannie, has delighted almost everyone who is privileged to know her with what our friends and I call Jeannieisms. De Vries says of Ginger, "She was one of those women who manage to be both dizzy and intelligent." And he adds, "The scatterbrained woman is not the worst company in the world, if it's brains she's scattering."

Great company, if you ask me. Jeannie accuses me of listening too carefully. I suppose I do. When you know you're in the presence of someone from whose lips jewels quite naturally fall, you do tend to pay attention. I'd hate to miss things like "I stopped trying to help her when I realized I was just spinning my heels." And the other day, Jeannie put on a startling display of verbal now-you-see-it-now-you-don't: "I could kick myself," she said. Then she mused aloud, "What for?" and she answered, "For forgetting *something*. I don't remember what." It's dazzling. Every day of my life I get an injection or two of euphoria. Not the worst company, indeed.

The reason I recall this now is that one of the things Ginger says in *Forever Panting* is, "You can see Long Island clear as a bell." I loved it. The concept of seeing something clear as a bell is supercharged with offbeat whimsy. You can imagine my delight on the day before Easter this year when the *Los Angeles Times* had a special religious section whose biggest front-page headline said, SKIES CLEAR AS A BELL FOR SUNRISE SERVICES. Take it away, De Vries.

A few weeks ago, Bob Van Scoyk—whom I've quoted several times in these columns, as he is one of my most quotable friends—phoned me. Bob also listens too carefully, as Jeannie would say. He asked me if I had been watching the gymnastics on television. I hadn't. I think he was talking about ABC's *Wide World of Sports*. Cathy Rigby, Bob said, was doing the commentary. Cathy Rigby (her married name is Mason) is Tinker Bell incarnate. She's our own homegrown version of Olga Korbut and Nadia Comaneci.

According to Bob, one of the gymnastic contestants on ABC was a girl Rigby had competed against a few years before. This girl, Rigby said, had not lost any of her skills during the intervening years. "In fact," said Rigby (according to Van Scoyk), "she really has more maturity. I'd say she has more maturity than even some of the younger contestants."

It's possible that Cathy Rigby, as she herself gains maturity, may become almost as breathtaking as Jeannie.

I don't know what this delightful knack springs from, but I'm sure the talent is a completely natural one. I never met either Gracie Allen or Jane Ace, but I'm certain that it was a natural talent in them, and I'm certain that others who have it are supremely natural people with no artificial additives or preservatives.

This morning, I took our niece to the airport. She had to catch an 8:25 flight. We allowed what I thought would be plenty of time, but what with very heavy traffic, we arrived in front of the terminal at 8:24. I grabbed her suitcase, and we ran through the terminal like O. J. Simpson. As we neared the departure gate, Candis shouted, "Hold the plane to Oakland!" and they did. It was that close, but we made it.

Later I was telling Jeannie about our close call, and I said that the traffic on the Ventura Freeway had been murder.

"Ventura Freeway traffic is always awful at that time of day," she said.

"Yes," I said, "but after we passed the Hollywood Freeway turnoff, it was clear as a b——," and I caught myself.

"Clear as a bell? she said, with a "Gotcha!" tone in her voice.

"Clear as a bell," I said, sheepishly.

I think maybe I have too many artificial additives. ●

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Answer to *Wit Twister* (see page 31): breath, Bertha, bather

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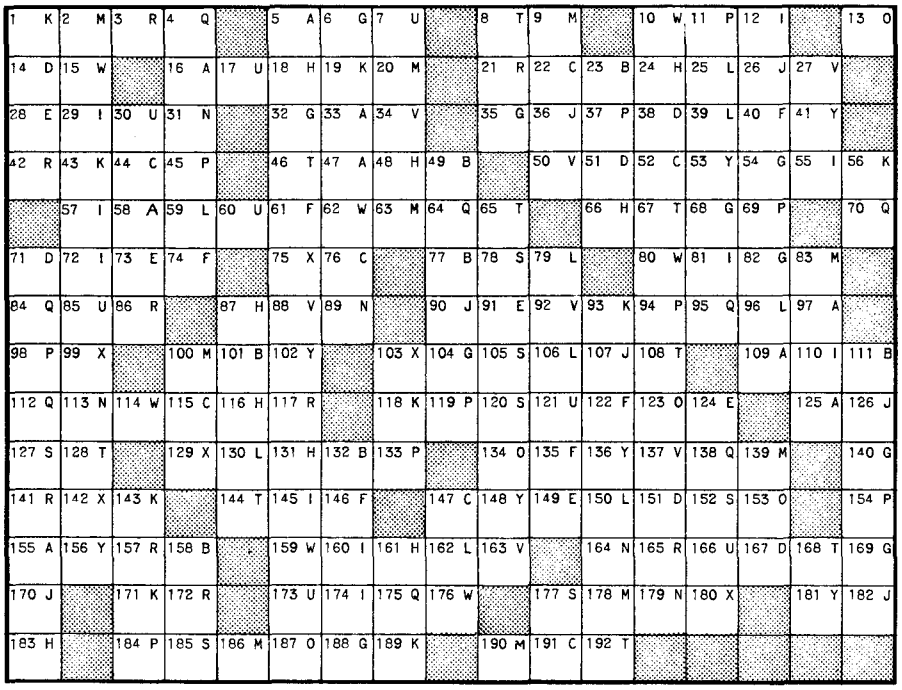
DOUBLE-CROSTIC

Number 149

by Thomas H. Middleton



Instructions

If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle.

Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper-right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.

The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.

The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.

Answer to ***Double-Crostic No. 148*** appears on page 6.

CLUES	WORDS
A. Heebie-jeebies (comp.)	5 33 47 109 125 155 58 16 97
B. Maxwell Anderson play (2 wds.)	101 132 23 49 77 111 158
C. Unit of play in cricket	191 22 44 52 76 115 147
D. Ability	151 167 14 38 51 71
E. Furnish, equip	73 91 124 149 28
F. Apathetic, indolent	40 61 74 122 135 146
G. Emily Brontë's violent, vengeful creation	169 188 6 32 54 68 82 104 140 35
H. First Christian king in Anglo-Saxon England	66 87 116 131 24 161 183 18 48
I. After consideration (3 wds.)	110 145 55 29 81 57 72 160 174 12
J. Foster, help	26 36 90 107 126 170 182
K. Distinguishes; opposes	93 171 189 1 19 43 118 143 56
L. Captivates, charms	79 96 106 130 150 25 162 59 39
M. Alcmene's husband	190 83 178 2 63 100 139 20 186 9
N. Swedish engineer, manufacturer, and philanthropist (1833–96)	31 179 164 89 113
O. Sleeps lightly or fitfully	153 13 187 123 134
P. Outspoken	184 94 133 154 11 37 98 45 69 119
Q. Madness, chaos	175 64 95 138 84 4 70 112
R. Shocked with fear	117 141 165 42 157 172 3 21 86
S. Dig up	177 105 152 120 185 127 78
T. Without hesitation (2 wds.)	192 8 65 128 168 144 46 67 108
U. General effect, as of a work of art	30 85 7 17 121 173 60 166
V. Title given by the sultan of Turkey to the viceroy or governor of Egypt	50 88 34 27 92 137 163
W. Extensively, thoroughly (2 wds.)	114 159 15 176 62 10 80
X. English philosopher and mathematician (1642–1727)	99 142 103 129 75 180
Y. Tames	53 102 148 181 136 156 41

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THE BACK DOOR

Mind over Mater

TWO RECENT contradictory news developments make me shudder for America. (1) By declining to review a California Court of Appeals ruling, the Supreme Court has cleared the way for a jury trial in the case of *NBC* v. *Niemi*. Olivia Niemi has sued NBC and KRON-TV in San Francisco for $11 million for airing a rape scene that rapists subsequently reenacted, in actual life, on her daughter. Niemi contends that since the television program prompted the act, the broadcaster should be held accountable for the resulting damages.

(2) A major department store in a large, undisclosed eastern city is testing a subliminal technique of controlling shoplifting. A message—"I am honest. I will not steal"—is embedded in a Muzak-like background in such a way that the shopper will hear it without being conscious of it. During the first nine months of testing, shoplifting decreased by about 30 percent. The inventor of the system, Dr. Hal Becker, has also pioneered a weight-control program that uses subliminal stimuli to dissuade overeaters and has strived to "enhance the entertainment value" of some "B grade movies" by superimposing visual subliminal stimuli—like hearts, flowers, and the words "tender" and "suspense" — onto film frames at the appropriate moments.

The relationship between these two developments is disturbing. On the one hand, thanks to the Supreme Court's ruling, there is a chance that a network will be deemed culpable for having an incalculable effect on the behavior of its viewers. On the other hand, the government is condoning a crime deterrent that deliberately manipulates the subconscious to affect behavior.

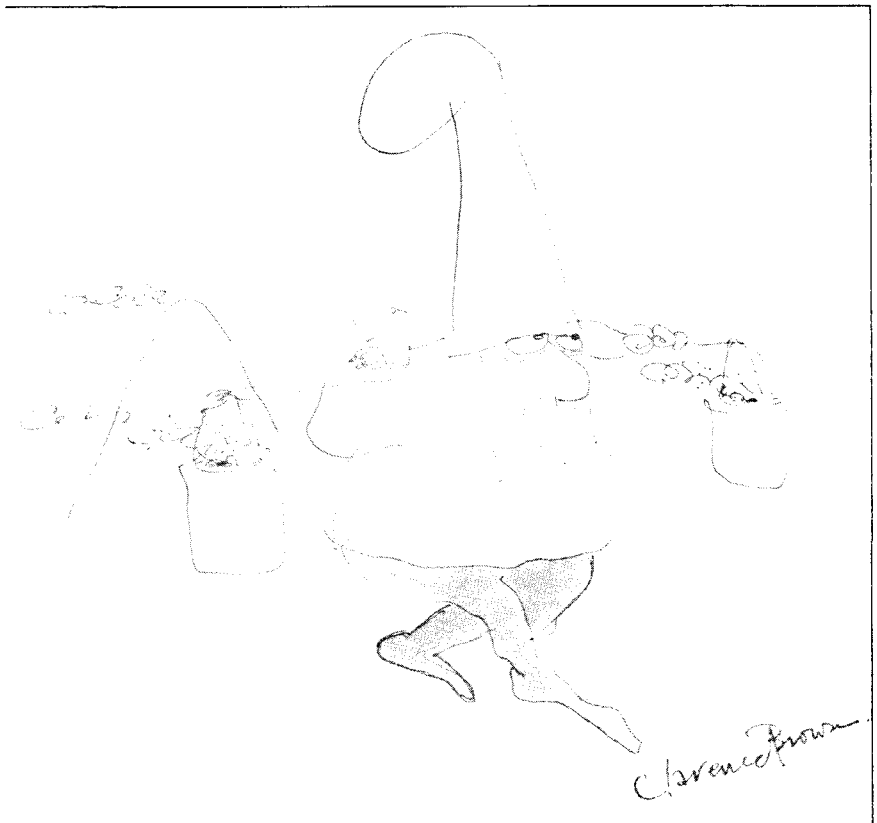
Ever since Freud discovered the subconscious, the easiest escape from guilt has been "my mother did it." Or if not Mother, then one's childhood environment or the influence of drugs or more recently, coercion, either physical or subliminal. Pre-Freud, people blamed the unruliness of their temperaments on demons, humors, fickle gods, the stars. A surprisingly ignoble Hamlet used the excuse of insanity when he justified his murder of Laertes's father ("If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away/it was not Hamlet did it"). All of us tend to envy the innocence of our infancies, and when we feel threatened, we long for a theory of motive that would restore to us that delicious guiltlessness.

To be sure, the subconscious is not a figment of the Austrian doctor's imagination. It exists, it influences our behavior, it *can* be influenced. But as Freud wrote, the role of society is to regulate, to channel our unruly urges into socially useful purposes. So while it is personally reassuring to blame intangible powers for our poor behavior, it is not helpful. Rather, we should accept responsibility for our actions and struggle to act in a way that is acceptable to society.

In this purported age of reason, the electronic media, particularly television, have replaced the gods as the creators of most that is undesirable in our social behavior. Television makes children disrespectful to their parents. Television shortens children's attention spans. Television routs book-learning. Television makes children at once passive (because they receive, rather than participate in, the drama) and aggressive (prompting violence by example). Television has become the principal scapegoat that parents and educators blame for their own failures. Instead of turning the mind-numbing machine off, parents and educators complain about the quality of the Saturday morning shows directed to two-year-olds!

If Olivia Niemi wins her suit, the worst loser will be society, not NBC. When hoodlums can blame their violence on the example of a TV documentary about hoodlums, both our free press and our notions of personal accountability will be in trouble.

Similarly, we cannot condone even well-intentioned systems that strive to modify our behavior by bypassing our conscious minds and by seducing our helpless subconsciouses. If it is in society's interests not to shoplift or rape, we should work to demonstrate that to people's *rational* minds. True, such a process may be more difficult and expensive, but in the end it builds citizens instead of puppets. —CARLL TUCKER



In the old days, before the discovery of eruptions, the lava had to be carried by hand down the mountain and thrown on the sleeping villagers. This took a lot of time.

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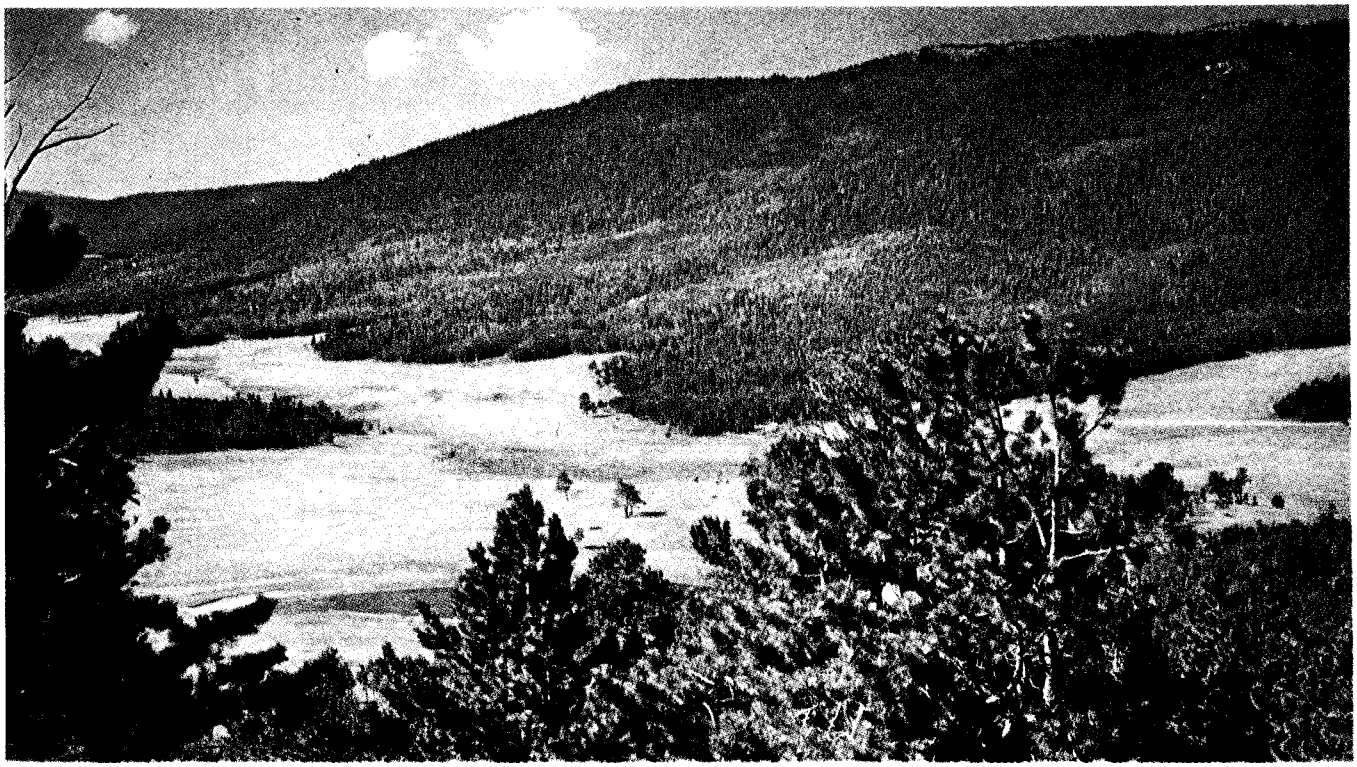

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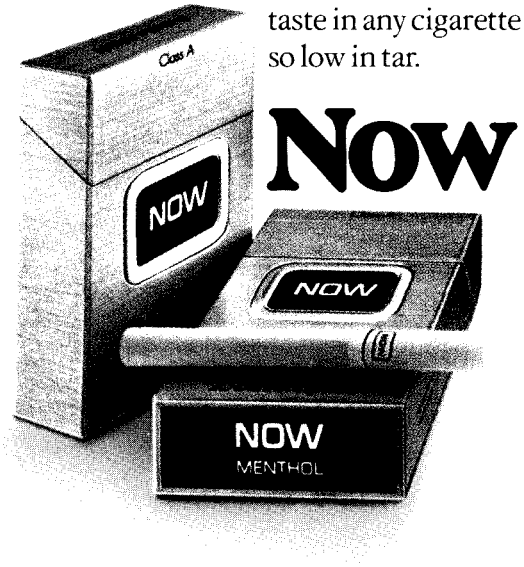

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